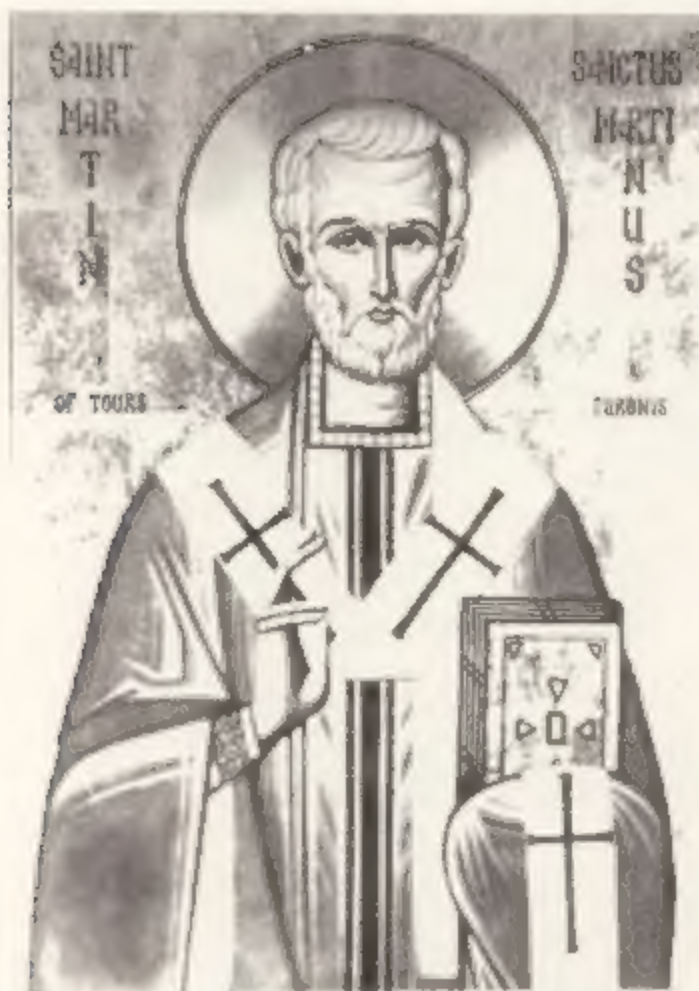


# LIVING ORTHODOXY



VOL VIII NO. 5 (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1986)



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**CONTENTS**

The Life of St. Martin the Merciful, Bishop of Tours .....	3
In Memory of His Grace Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereaslavka ( <i>cont'd.</i> ) .....	25
The Life and Suffering of the Holy Hieromartyr Anthimus, and the Many with Him .....	35
Urgent News from Chile and Uganda .....	42
Menaion Services Update .....	43

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## THE LIFE OF SAINT MARTIN THE MERCIFUL, BISHOP OF TOURS

Whose Memory the Holy Church Celebrates on the 12th of October

*There follow two independent accounts of the life of St. Martin: one from the Menology of St. Dimitry of Rostov; the second from Western sources. We include both because of the special interest of St. Martin to those of us who are the rightful heirs to the genuine Orthodox tradition of the West, and that the one may complement the other. We contemplated attempting to merge the two (simple enough in itself, as they are very similar in general outline) in order to save space, but decided rather to leave them intact, as a witness to the reliability of two apparently quite independent traditions.*

### FROM THE MENOLOGY OF ST. DIMITRY OF ROSTOV

Saint Martin of Tours was born in the first half of the 4th century, a native of the city of Savaria in the province of Pannonia Superior [which is now the city of Szombathely, in western Hungary, near the Austrian border], the child of pagan parents. His father first served as a common soldier, but by his diligent service rose through the ranks to attain the lofty position of military tribune. Martin spent his childhood years in Ticinium [the present-day Pavia, in northern Italy] to which his father, because of circumstances occasioned by his employment, had to move while Martin was yet a child. Even in his earliest childhood, the saint pleased God with his meekness, kindness and purity of soul, revealing in himself signs of a calling from on high.

At that time, the Christian Faith was spreading rapidly and openly all throughout the Roman Empire, and Martin, having made the acquaintance of several believers, heard of the True Faith from them and began to yearn after it with all his soul, grasping the truth with his pure uncorrupted heart. Aflame with love for the virtues and the holy life of the Christians, the ten-year old boy, against the wishes of his parents, became a catechumen. He did not take up formal secular studies, being satisfied with the teaching of Christ alone. When he was twelve years of age, he conceived the pious desire of becoming a hermit, emulating the solitary ascetical life of the venerable Anthony the Great. But God judged otherwise, so that Martin's piety might thus become all the more apparent even before his enlightenment in the font of holy baptism.

Martin's father was extremely displeased with his son's amicable relations with the Christians and his inclinations toward piety, the more so because, enamored of human fame, he wished to make of his strong and active boy a warrior of renown, who might bring honor to his name on the field of battle. Thus, when Martin reached the age of fifteen, at which, by imperial decree, the sons of veterans had to enroll in the army, his father seized him, clapped him in irons, and compelled him by force to take the military oath. As the son of a tribune and a comely and strong-limbed youth, Martin became an officer in the cavalry and was entrusted with considerable responsibility by his superiors.

Martin's new position of prominence did not alter his humble and pious manner of life. His means permitted him to be attended by two or even more servants from among the soldiers; but he was satisfied with one, whom he treated not as a slave, but as a friend and brother, doing that man more service than availing himself of his services. He showed his fellow soldiers great love and inspired in them not only a sincere admiration for himself, but a respectful astonishment at his strictly moral life amid constant occasions of temptation. Even while a soldier, Martin wholeheartedly dedicated himself to works of Christian mercy. Retaining only enough of his salary to feed and clothe himself, and denying himself in all things, with what remained he helped the unfortunate, clothed the naked, fed the hungry, and did many good deeds.

Martin's military service was spent in Gaul [the present-day France]. His army had its winter quarters in the city of Samarobriua [modern Amiens]. The winter was extremely severe, and Martin, therefore, who was renowned for his almsgiving, gave even more generously of his means for the sustenance and upkeep of the poor. One day, as he passed through the city gates, he chanced upon a half-naked pauper, who had almost succumbed to the cold. Those who passed by paid him no heed and were content to leave him without help, most probably because they themselves were in need and had nothing to give him. Martin also had nothing; he was unable to give the poor man any alms, for he had already dissipated his own funds. But his heart was pierced with sorrow and pity at the sight of this wretched pauper. Martin, therefore, without pausing long to think, but desiring only to render speedy assistance to the unfortunate, quickly removed his military cloak, drew his sword, and, cutting it into two pieces, gave one to the poor man who was suffering from the cold, and wrapped himself in the remaining half. Certain of those who passed by saw this and laughed to see an officer so outlandishly clad. But the heart of the merciful soldier was filled with joy; he was not upset by the mockery, being mindful of the words of the divine Savior: "[I was] naked, and ye clothed Me....Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me" [Mt. 25: 36, 40]. And the Lord strengthened Martin's faith and consoled him with a heavenly vision because of his great mercy. At night, while he was asleep, Martin beheld the Lord Jesus Christ Who, appearing to him clad in a piece of cloth, ordered him to look and see if this was not the very half of his cloak which he had given to the poor man at the gates. Martin stood rooted in awed silence; but Christ turned from him to the throng of angels who were present and said in a loud voice: "With this cloth did Martin clothe Me, though he is yet but a catechumen!" Enraptured by so wondrous and consoling a vision, the young man awoke. It had been three years since he entered military service. Martin then delayed not longer, but immediately received holy baptism, being eighteen years of age.

After his baptism, Martin yearned all the more zealously to obtain a discharge from a military service which was entirely alien to his pious inclinations and was not in accord with his cherished desire for the ascetic life of solitude. And beyond all expectation, his desire was soon fulfilled. His tribune, who was a Christian, was loathe to part with him. When Martin informed him of his intention to leave military service and become a monk, the tribune promised that, if he served to the end of his enlistment, he also would leave military service, and the two of them could withdraw from the world. Martin felt obliged to acquiesce to the tribune's desire and remained in the army for two more years, taking part in the onerous campaigns of the Emperor Constantius against the savage Alemanni, a barbarian tribe, in the years 354-355.

During these campaigns, undertaken to bring an end to the continuous attacks of the barbarian hordes on the frontier provinces of the Roman Empire, the command of that portion of the forces in which Martin served was entrusted by the Emperor to his cousin, Julian, who was elevated to the rank of Caesar. The army's comfort was not great, and Julian, as an incentive to his forces, decided to reward them with presents taken from the booty plundered from the Alemanni. To encourage them further, in view of the forthcoming battle, Julian commanded that each soldier be called by name, and he himself distributed the gifts. When Martin's name was called, he stepped forward and boldly said to his commander: "O Caesar, I have hitherto served under thee in the cavalry; but permit me now to enlist in God's service! Let another enjoy thy gift who will continue in thy service. But I am a soldier of Christ, and should therefore not fight for thee." "Thou art a coward," the enraged Julian replied reproachfully; "Tomorrow there is to be a battle; and lo! fear of battle, not fear of God, compelleth thee to refuse to serve!" But Martin continued with boldness: "If thou takest my refusal for cowardice instead of faith, then place me alone tomorrow, without any weapon, in the most perilous position in the fray. Then wilt thou see that, though unarmed save with the name of Christ and the sign of His holy Cross, I shall fearlessly trample upon the ranks of the enemy!" "So be it!" said Julian; and he ordered Martin placed under guard until the following day.

But the next day, the Alemanni, in view of the excellent deployment of Julian's army, dispatched emissaries to him, suing for peace and promising complete submission. A treaty was concluded, and thereafter Martin was released from his military oath and was immediately discharged from the army. He then went to Hilary, Bishop of the city of Limonum [present-day Poitiers], renowned for his sanctity of life and Orthodox Christian learning, to entrust himself to the spiritual guidance of that holy man. Hilary received the youth with heartfelt love and, after testing his character somewhat, desired to ordain him to the diaconate; but Martin, in his profound humility, declined this rank and could only be persuaded to accept the more modest, though more onerous, rank of exorcist.

When he had been an exorcist for but a short time, Martin began to be troubled by the thought that his parents were still pagans, and, in consequence of a vision he received in a dream, he undertook a journey to his homeland not long afterward, to convert them to Christ. To do so, he had to traverse the Alps, where he often became lost in the trackless wilderness and was constantly in danger from brigands. Indeed, one day he fell into their hands. One of the robbers drew his sword to cut off Martin's head, but one of his comrades, taking pity on the youth, stayed his hand. Instead, Martin was bound and placed under the guard of the robber who had saved his life. "Who art thou?" asked the thief. "I am a Christian," the young man meekly replied.

After this, a lengthy conversation began between them, during which Martin made such an impression on the brigand that he became ashamed of his wicked, disgraceful way of life. He straightway released Martin and begged him with tears to pray for him. Thereafter, the former robber began to lead a pious life and subsequently became a monk, struggling in asceticism in St. Martin's monastery in Gaul.

When he finally reached the frontiers of Italy and continued his journey, amid many trials and difficulties, Martin encountered a man who was extremely repulsive and dreadful to look upon, who



cast himself upon him with a great many curious inquiries, being particularly desirous to know whither Martin was going. "It is my intention to go whithersoever the Lord calleth me," answered Martin. "Very well," the man responded angrily, "but bear in mind that wherever thou goest and whatever thou shalt undertake, I will oppose thee!" This encounter and conversation left a profound impression on Martin. He was not afraid, but with steadfast trust in the all-good providence of God, meekly remarked: "The Lord is with me; I shall not fear what man can do to me." When he uttered these words, the vile creature instantly vanished. Then Martin knew of a certainty that it had been man's primeval enemy, the devil, who had assumed human guise.

When he reached his parents' home, Martin found them still alive. His father treated him with hostility and remained unmoved by his preaching. But his mother was touched by his exhortations and became illumined with the light of holy baptism, along with many other people of his native city. But the saint's success in proclaiming the Gospel in Savaria was short-lived. At that time, because of the impious Emperor Constantius' sponsorship of the Arians, their heresy spread throughout Pannonia. Martin fought against this false teaching and was therefore subjected to persecution. After being physically tortured, he was expelled from the city. He then made his way into Italy and, sojourning for a time in Mediolanum [the present-day Milan], he built for himself a hermit's cell; but he was driven even from that place by the Arian bishop Auxentius, after all manner of vexations and tribulations. Then the holy one decided to become a hermit on a rocky promontory on the island of Gallinaria [in the Gulf of Genoa], from whence he went to Capraria [Capraia, in the Ligurian Sea], which was bereft of any human population, due to its being infested with venomous adders. There he passed his life in feats of divine contemplation and prayer, with only one companion, sustaining himself only on such wild plants as grew there. And the providence of God miraculously preserved the holy ascetic, so that he did not sustain so much as a single snake bite.

Hearing that his teacher Hilary, who had been driven from his see by the Arians, had received permission to return, Martin went to him in Limonum, and, after their five-year separation, they embraced one another. Hilary again urged Martin to accept ordination to the priesthood or, failing that, to the diaconate, but Martin persistently refused, desiring to remain a simple monk until the end of his life. Hilary gave him permission to found a monastery and allotted for this purpose a site not far distant from Limonum, in the village of Locociagum [now known as Liguge]. Friends and disciples soon gathered around the pious youth, to learn from him the perfect monastic life. Martin received everyone with love and served as the best model of the ascetic, God-pleasing life for all. Though he had received practically no education whatever, nevertheless, given knowledge by the power of the grace of Christ which abode within him, he brought understanding and guided to the path of true Christian life, by his godly thought and the feats of his virtuous monastic life, people who were knowledgeable and profoundly learned, several of whom, under his influence, spurned this vain world, dedicating themselves wholly to the service of God and ascetic struggles in the wilderness. In a short time, St. Martin's monastery flourished and acquired renown. It was the first monastery in Gaul and became a hot-bed of monasticism in that land.

At that time, one of the catechumens who had been coming to St. Martin's monastery to receive

spiritually profitable instruction in the Holy Faith and the life of piety, suddenly fell ill of a fever and died before he could be baptized. The venerable one was not then present in the monastery. On his return, he found the lifeless body of the catechumen surrounded by the weeping brethren. The saint sent everyone out of the cell and, lifting up his hands in prayer for two hours, called the dead one back to life by the grace of Christ. The resurrected catechumen immediately received holy baptism and afterwards lived a long and God-pleasing life. Following his resurrection, he related that, after his soul was separated from his body, he was set before the dread Judge, Who pronounced a sentence of condemnation upon him; but two angels told the Judge that he was the one for whom Martin was praying, and the Judge then commanded that he be returned to the saint.

Thereafter, word spread far and wide that Martin was a holy and wonderfully apostolic man, imbued with power from on high.

While he attracted a great many disciples—persons of various ranks and from divers levels of society—and influenced them by the example of his virtuous and strictly ascetical life, the holy Martin also made a great impression upon them by his teaching. He himself clearly beheld the truth of Christ and was firmly convinced of it; and with his clarity, animation, simplicity and conviction, he was able to communicate and explain it to believers and unbelievers alike. He loved to teach by means of parables, which had a profound effect upon those who listened to them.

Seeing the great struggles of the holy Martin, and unable to endure his holy, God-pleasing life, the devil, that primordial enemy of the human race, waged a perfidious war against him, appearing to him and tempting him in every way possible. Yet although the saint beheld himself constantly surrounded by demons, and among them the prince of them all, he never showed the least fear of them. Indeed, he even openly challenged the devil to battle.

Then Satan tried to deceive and delude the holy one by assuming the guise of an angel of light, for, as the Apostle Paul says, sometimes "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" [II Cor. 11: 14]. And so, one day, he appeared to Martin while the latter was at prayer, preceded and surrounded by a purple light, arrayed in royal vesture, adorned with a crown of gold and pearls, shod with golden sandals, his countenance suffused with joy and gladness. At the sight of this extraordinary, marvellous apparition, Martin was at first greatly troubled, and both stood for a time in silence. Finally, the devil said: "Knowest thou, O Martin, whom thou now seest before thee? I am Christ. Before appearing for my Second Coming, I desired to reveal myself to thee." The saint hesitated and made no answer to this. "Wherefore dost thou doubt what thou seest?" asked the evil one; "I am Christ!" Then Martin, prompted by the Holy Spirit, perceived that it was the devil, and he said: "My Lord Jesus Christ did not promise that He would appear in purple and in a splendid crown. I will not believe that I am seeing the return of Christ while He doth not come in the same form in which He suffered and doth not show visibly the wounds which He endured on the Cross!" Then the devil vanished like smoke and filled the cell with such a dreadful stench that he left no doubt who it was who had appeared.

But while he was vexed by such deceptive visions, the saint also received consoling and grace-filled

visions of angels and the saints of God from beyond the grave. Thus, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul frequently appeared to him and comforted him with their divinely inspired discourse. The grace of God manifestly rested upon the holy Martin, visibly revealing that it abode within him, in the sight of all his disciples, especially when he celebrated the divine services with compunction, and when he blessed the people. Thus, one day, they saw that, as he lifted up his right hand to bless, there issued forth from it an extraordinary radiance. And another time they saw his brow bathed in effulgence.

"A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under a bushel, but on a lampstand, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house" [Mt. 5: 14-15]. Thus it became apparent to all that God had not chosen the holy Martin for hesychastic struggles in the stillness and solitude of a monastic cell, but intended him to be set up high on the lampstand of the Church, that, by his gifts of grace, good works and holy life, he might illumine the faithful as the shepherd of the great flock of Christ. His great and constantly growing fame made it indubitable that the people of some Church would, sooner or later, call him to accept the episcopal rank. Thus, when the episcopal cathedra of the city of Caesarodunum [the present-day Tours] fell vacant, the people wanted to have the venerable Martin as their bishop. But by that time all knew Martin's profound humility, which had earlier prompted him to decline persistently to accept ordination to the priesthood or the diaconate. They then resolved to resort to subterfuge and force. A certain citizen of that place, a man by the name of Ruricius, went to the saint at his monastery and, falling at his feet, begged him to come and pray for his sick wife. The holy one went; but there a large crowd of the faithful surrounded him, bore him into the city and had him consecrated to the episcopate in the church.

Elevated to the hierarchal cathedra, the holy Martin did not alter his demeanor or his life in the least, but was, as before, a model of profound humility for all: he was satisfied to wear simple clothing and to eat the coarsest of food, and dedicated most of his time to monastic struggles, withdrawing from the world and striving to attain inner stillness. He selected for himself a wild, solitary place outside the city, in which he could give himself over to his usual monastic feats. This place was sheltered by rocky crags and bounded on one side by the River Loire, and access to it was possible only by way of a single path. There the holy Martin erected for himself a wooden cell. Nearby, other pious ascetics also began to settle, seeking the life of the desert. Some built huts for themselves, while others hollowed out caves in the side of the cliffs. Thus, as many as eighty brethren gathered around the holy Martin and formed a new monastic community. It was known as the Monastery of Martin, but in later times came to be called Marmoutier, and achieved renown not only in Gaul, but all throughout the West. The monks of this community accepted the rule of Martin and exercised themselves in struggles of fasting and prayer under his experienced guidance, benefiting from his spiritually profitable, yet easily understandable, simple instructions and the example of his exalted, ascetical life. The brethren owned no personal possessions, everything being held in common. It was not permitted to buy or sell anything; moreover, the younger monks were limited in their activity to the copying of manuscripts, whereas the older monks exercised themselves exclusively in prayer. They rarely left their cells, except to attend the common service. No one drank wine except the sick, and their sustenance, taken only once a day, consisted solely of bread, vegetables and olives. Their clothing was fashioned of coarse camel's-hair, even though many of the monks were of eminent lineage. The brethren lived in unconditional



obedience and, for the most part, in silence. In time, the community produced no few bishops who labored greatly to spread Christian enlightenment among the pagans.

St. Martin himself zealously worked to convert the heathen, and for the most part eliminated idolatry from Gaul. In this apostolic ministry he showed himself to be a courageous, unwavering and self-denying preacher of the truth of Christ. To accomplish this, Martin often left his beloved monastery and travelled through the outlying areas, destroying the pagan temples and cutting down the sacred trees of the idolaters. He also erected churches and instructed the heathen in the Faith of Christ. The saint's preaching met with great success and was frequently accompanied by signs and wonders, which the holy one wrought in the sight of all the unbelievers through the power of Christ.

The first site of the conversion of the pagans was Amboise, about fifteen miles from Tours. Having constructed a church there for his preaching, he placed it in charge of several of his disciples to care for. But paganism was still a force to be reckoned with in that place, and great danger threatened the Christians at the hands of the infidels; for there remained there a pagan temple which housed a great idol which was worshipped by the people. The disciples of St. Martin decided against destroying this refuge of idolatry, despite the command of the holy one. And when Martin returned to Amboise, he was himself persuaded that it would indeed be a difficult matter to demolish the temple. Then, selecting a solitary place, he spent the whole night in ardent prayer to God. And the Lord hearkened to the supplication of His favored one: in the morning a dreadful tempest struck, which razed the pagan temple to its foundation and smashed the idol which it housed.

Passing through the land of Edoin with his preaching of the Gospel, the holy Martin reached the city of Augustodunum [the present-day Autun] and stopped there to pray at the grave of the holy martyr Simphorian [+178, one of the martyrs under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius] and to help its bishop, Simplicius, to extirpate paganism from those parts. Near the chapel in which the relics of the martyr reposed, there was a pagan temple dedicated to the demigod Saron, where dwelt a number of widely venerated druid priests. Fearlessly, Martin entered that temple and cast down the statue and altar of Saron. A mob of armed pagans, enraged at his actions, then fell upon him. One, more audacious than the rest, drew his sword to strike the saint down, but an invisible power cast him at the saint's feet, and, seized with terror, the hapless pagan humbly and with tears besought the holy one to forgive and take pity on him. At the sight of this miracle, all the other pagans of that place came to believe in Christ, and the pagan temple was converted into a sanctuary of the true God.

No less striking a miracle was wrought through the supplication of the holy one in the village of Leprosa [Leprou, today]. Moved by apostolic zeal, he desired also to demolish a temple in that place, which was highly revered by the pagans; but its inhabitants drove him away. He then withdrew to a safe place near that village, where he spent three days in fasting and prayer, beseeching God to destroy the pagan temple. In response to his fervent supplication, two radiant angels appeared to him, arrayed, to all seeming, in armor; and they declared to him that they had been sent by God to assist him against the heathen. When he heard this, Martin made haste immediately to return to the village, and, by the power of the grace of Christ, he miraculously reduced the altars and idols to dust in the sight of the

people, who were rendered immobile by an invisible divine power. Beholding such a miracle and the wondrous demolition of the temple, the inhabitants of that place acknowledged the impotence of their idols and converted to Christ.

One day, the holy Martin, in company with several of his disciples, passed by a certain populous town on the way to the city of Autricum [the present-day Chartres]. A large crowd, consisting solely of pagans, issued forth to meet them, for no one in that place knew of Christ or had heard the truths of the Christian Faith. So great was the fame of this holy man that it drew to him even a multitude of the heathen, which filled a field as far as the eye could see. Martin perceived that he had to act and take advantage of this opportunity to convert the unbelievers to Christ. And so, inspired by the Holy Spirit, he began to preach aloud with ardor, proclaiming the word of God to the pagans and sighing often from the depths of his soul that such a multitude of the people were ignorant of our Lord and Savior.

At that time, a certain woman, whose son had died not long before the saint's arrival, brought forward his lifeless body and, laying it at the holy hierarch's feet, stretched forth her hands to him, saying: "We know that thou art the friend of God. Return thou my son to me, for he was mine only child!" And the crowd joined the hapless mother and added their entreaties to hers. St. Martin then took the body of the dead one in his arms, knelt down in the midst of the multitude, and, having prayed, stood up and restored the boy to his mother alive. On seeing this, all present with one voice confessed that Christ is God, and, casting themselves at the feet of the saint, earnestly besought him to make them Christians. The holy hierarch, without delay, laid his hands on them in that very field and catechized them with the word of truth. And rumor of this miracle quickly spread throughout the land. Thus did the holy Martin also spread the light of the Gospel with success in other regions of Gaul.

One day, a certain layman by the name of Evanthius, who was afflicted with a terrible illness and was already at death's door, sent word for Martin to come to him. The saint immediately set out to visit the sick man; yet he had not managed to complete half his journey, when the sick one, sensing the power of the holy one approaching, suddenly felt himself completely healed. He therefore rose up and went forth to meet the holy Martin and the disciples who were accompanying him. The following day, Martin intended to make the return journey, but at the importunities of the one who had been healed, he remained. Meanwhile, an adder inflicted a mortal sting upon a certain boy who was a member of the family of Evanthius. The latter bore the dying child in on his own shoulders and laid him at the feet of the holy man, trusting in his great power to work miracles and convinced that nothing was impossible for him. The serpent's venom had already penetrated all the boy's members: his sinews contracted and his stomach swelled up like a wine-skin. Stretching forth his hand, Martin passed it over all the child's limbs and probed with his finger around the wounds caused by the deadly fangs of the serpent. Then all present beheld with astonishment how, from all throughout the boy's body, the poison began to flow toward Martin's finger, issuing forth with blood from the open wounds. Thereafter, the child's health was completely restored, and all who had witnessed this miracle glorified God Who is wondrous in His saints.

No less striking a miracle did the holy Martin perform in the city of Carpotum over a maiden who was

a mate. They brought to Martin a twelve year old girl who had been a mute from birth. Her father entreated the saint to loose her tongue by his prayers. The holy one, however, deferred this to the bishops Valentinus and Vitalinus who were with him, maintaining that such was beyond his powers, and that for them, who were more perfect in the virtues, it was possible. But those hierarchs, joining their own supplications to the pleas of the hapless father, persuaded Martin to do what was expected of him. Then Martin ordered the people present to withdraw, and in the presence of only the bishops and the father of the maiden, he stretched himself out on the ground and prayed earnestly; then he blessed a little oil, and poured it into the maiden's mouth, taking hold of her tongue with his fingers. And a marvellous wonder justified the faith of the saint! When the holy hierarch asked the girl's father what her name was, she herself answered him herself intelligibly, and her father, clasping the knees of the saintly bishop, cried out with joy and tears and bore witness before all there assembled that this was the first thing his daughter had ever uttered in her life.

One day, as Martin was entering Lutetia [the modern-day Paris] in the company of a multitude of the people, he chanced upon a leper of loathsome visage, who was spurned by all. But the holy one, taking pity on him, kissed him and gave him his blessing; and lo! the afflicted one was instantaneously cleansed of his leprosy. The next day, he went to the church and gave thanks for his cure.

Paulinus, a pious government official who was later glorified for the sanctity of his life, fell prey to a painful affliction of the eye, and a cataract already covered one of his orbs; but the holy Martin touched his eye with a bit of cloth, and the pain immediately vanished.

St. Martin's acts of almsgiving and Christian love for the unfortunate and the destitute were innumerable, and for this he has come to be known as "the Merciful." One day, in winter-time, he came upon a half-clad man on the way to church, who begged the holy one for some clothing. The saint summoned his archdeacon and ordered him to clothe the shivering man; then, entering his chancery at the church, he sat there alone, as was his custom. But since the deacon had not given any clothing to the poor man, the latter burst in upon the blessed one and began to complain of both the deacon and the cold. Then the saint, secretly removing his tunic from beneath his outer robe, told the pauper to clothe himself in it and depart. In a little while, the deacon entered and informed the holy bishop that the time had arrived to celebrate the solemn service, for the people were awaiting him in the church. To this, the saint replied, with himself in mind, "It is first necessary to cloth the poor. I cannot go to church if the pauper doth not receive vesture." The deacon, failing to understand, because he did not notice that the saint was naked beneath his outer garments, put forward the excuse that he could not find the poor man. But Martin repeated insistently, "Let clothing be made ready and brought to me. The poor man will not remain without raiment." Forced by necessity, the cleric, peeved, went to the nearby shops and, for five coins, purchased a short, coarse garment and set it angrily at Martin's feet, saying, "Here is the garment, but there is no poor man." The holy one then calmly ordered him to stand for a short time outside the door, and, secretly clothing himself in the short tunic the deacon had bought, went to the church to celebrate the divine liturgy. And the Lord did not delay Martin's reward for this private act of Christian charity. That day, when he blessed the Sacrifice during the divine service, there appeared around his head a ball of fire, like a flame, which, reaching upwards, emitted a long ray of

brilliance. This most glorious miracle was witnessed by only a few chosen ones out of the great multitude who were present: a certain pious disciple of St. Martin by the name of Gallus, one of the virgins, a priest and three monks.

The meekness for which Martin was renowned moved even the pagans to love him. In general, he had practically no enemies whatever, and where there were such, they hated him for his virtues, which they did not themselves possess and were unable to emulate. Moreover, Martin never condemned anyone and never repaid anyone evil for evil. So indifferent was he to all offenses that he even let insults by his own clergymen pass unpunished; he never chastised them for the offenses they caused him and inasmuch as it depended on him, never deprived them of his love. No one ever saw him angry, disorderly or laughing. His demeanor was always the same, his countenance suffused with a heavenly joy. He never had anything in his lips but the name of Christ Jesus. There was never aught in his heart save piety, peace and compassion. He would often even weep over the sins of those of his detractors who, in his presence or behind his back, attacked him with venomous tongues and vipers' mouths.

The patience and meekness St. Martin had with regard to those who treated him with dishonor are clear from the following example. Among the clergy of his monastery there was a certain young man by the name of Britius, who was of the lowest class of society. Martin had taken him in, educated him and, eventually, ordained him to the diaconate. At the instigation of evil spirits, Britius began to revile his innocent teacher foully, to his face and in his absence. The holy man tried to reprove him with meek instruction, but this had no effect upon the foolish one, and he continued to utter even greater blasphemies, and finally fled. Meeting upon the road a sick man who asked him where he might find the holy Martin, Britius called the holy bishop an old charlatan and other derogatory things. Later, after he had healed that sick man, Martin meekly asked Britius why he had called him a charlatan. "I never called thee such!" replied the deacon. "Was not mine ear by thy mouth, though thou spakest behind my back?" the holy hierarch remarked; "Thou also, when I die, shalt become a bishop, and thou shalt have to suffer much."

After this, Britius fell prey to attacks of rage, and one day, as Martin was sitting on a bench outside his cell, the deacon assailed him with angry mockeries, meanwhile, on the nearby cliff faces, two demons were seen prodding him to greater insanity. "I am holier than thou!" screamed the cleric, "I was raised in a monastery, whilst thou wast once a soldier!" The brethren demanded that Britius be made an example and deposed from his rank, but Martin calmly endured his mockery. When shortly after this, Britius, touched by the saint's meekness, came to his senses and cast himself at his feet, tormented by the pangs of conscience, Martin only remarked: "Britius only did harm to himself, not to me. If the Lord Jesus Christ endured even the presence of Judas by His side, should not I then bear the presence of this youth by mine?"

Martin's prediction was fulfilled. Britius subsequently changed so much that, following the death of the saint, he was made his successor, after which he had to endure many tribulations and... usage before he reposed in peace. He had been bishop for thirty-three years when he was driven from his see in disgrace by the people, who believed a false accusation which had been made against him. Only after

seven years of grievous exile was he restored to his episcopal cathedra. So transformed was he morally and so virtuous had his life become, that Britius is now honored as a saint by the Western Church, his feast being celebrated on the 13th of November.

The degree to which the influence of the holy Martin made itself irresistibly and powerfully felt by the most haughty and hard-hearted of men, and even by the mighty of this world, is shown by the following examples. At the beginning of his episcopacy Caesarodunum was horrified by the arrival of the cruel provincial governor Avitian, whose ferocity even that of the wild beasts could not rival. Behind his entourage followed long lines of prisoners whom the cruel governor wanted to execute in such a manner as to intimidate the city. The compassionate Martin, who did not fear the governor's rage, resolved to aid both the prisoners and his episcopal city, and at midnight went to the portals of Avitian's palace. That night, the governor's uneasy sleep was suddenly disturbed, when it seemed to him that he felt a powerful blow and heard a voice he did not recognize, which said to him: "Sleepest thou here while the servant of God lieth beyond the doors of thy palace?"

Avitian ordered his servants to look outside the doors, but they, having made a cursory inspection, assured him that it had been only his imagination; and, mortified, he lay down again to sleep. But soon he was awakened again by a loud cry: "Martin standeth at thy gates!" Then the servants found that such was indeed the case. The governor commanded that the hierarch be brought into his presence, and asked him: "Why hast thou come hither?" "I know thine intention even before thou gavest voice to it," the holy bishop boldly replied, "Depart and do not do this thing, lest the wrath of heaven destroy thee." Terrified by the inspired, prophetic voice of the holy hierarch and convicted by his own conscience, Avitian hastened to obey the saint's command: he set the prisoners at liberty and left the city.

Subsequently also, the reproofs of the holy Martin exercised a good influence on the character of this cruel governor. One day when Avitian visited Caesarodunum again, the saint entered his room and stood in silence, gazing at him reprovingly. "Why lookest thou so reproachfully at me, holy one?" asked Avitian. "I am not looking at thee," answered Martin, "but at the evil demon sitting on thy neck." And the words of the holy hierarch produced a good effect, and caused the wicked governor to abandon his evil plans.

Valentinian I, Emperor of the western part of the Roman Empire (364-375), hearing of the glory of St. Martin from a quarters, expressed a wish to make his acquaintance, but his consort, Justina, who was a zealous Arian, would not permit this. Thus, when Martin travelled on important business to Augusta Treverorum, the modern-day Trier, where the Emperor was then in residence, the ruler tried to drag against his wishes to receive the saint. When he refused to gain audience with the sovereign, the emperor, in the holy hierarch, perceived a powerful aid against him. On the seventh day, an angel appeared to him and ordered him to go to the palace to see the Emperor. Having received such a suggestion from his high Martin, who would not disobey, and finding the gates wide open, presented himself before the Emperor, who, in the person of Valentinian, knew him at once, but suddenly felt that seated in which he was sitting, somehow caught fire. Compelled to rise, his demeanor changed



and he received the saint with a cordial embrace, conversed with him for some time, invited him to stay at the palace as an honored guest for several days, and on his departure offered him costly gifts, which the holy hierarch, however, declined, earning yet greater respect in the Emperor's eyes.

In the year 383 the Roman army proclaimed Maximus emperor, and Gratian, the son and successor of Valentinian I, ruined in 375, 383, was defeated and murdered when his soldiers murmured. His brother Valentinian II was forced to flee and was deposed. Then the holy Martin journeyed to Augusta Treverorum to intercede before the Emperor Maximus for those who had sided with Gratian and who were threatened with execution. It was extremely important to Maximus that he secure the loyalty of the clergy, especially that of so well-loved and famous a bishop as St. Martin. He therefore requested the saint's arrival at his court and invited him to his palace for a royal banquet. But Martin refused, and with extraordinary boldness replied: "I cannot sit at the table of a man who has deposed an emperor, his brother, and his throne!" Thereafter Martin warned the Emperor that a storm he would meet with some of his successors in his father's house of which the destruction and salvation awaited him. Maximus restrained his anger and tried to persuade the holy hierarch, but he had not set the crown upon his head, his own son, because the soldiers had compelled him to accept the crown for the defense of the realm against his enemies. Finally, yielding to the importunities of the Emperor, St. Martin consented to attend the banquet, at which were assembled high-ranking officials and eminent personages, but never. Martin was seated in the place of the greatest honor, and the priest who had accompanied him was placed between the Emperor's brother and uncles. During the feast the Emperor was presided with a cup of wine, but he ordered it given to Martin first, that he might receive a back from the emperor's hands. But Martin, having sipped from it, handed it, not to the Emperor, but to someone else, as though his person were of higher rank than the Emperor. This astounded the sovereign and at present Maximus, however, did not lose his composure, but thereafter showed the holy Martin even greater respect. Thereafter often summoned and received Martin with honor in his palace, conversing with him on heavenly affairs and about the life to come, the everlasting glory of the saints, and other spiritual and ecclesiastical subjects. His pious empress attended to Martin's holy discourse and instructions with attention and tears, and finally, with her husband's approval, prepared a meal for the holy one alone, which she made with her own hands. Indeed, she waited on him as a servant, seated at his feet, passing the food and drink to him herself. Later, when the feast was over, she gathered together all the crumbs and remains and made of them a meal for herself. Nevertheless, the saint's predictions as to Maximus' fate were accurately fulfilled, at first Maximus did indeed manage to force Valentinian I out of Asia in the year 387, but Theodosius II, the Younger, who ruled the eastern portion of the Empire, and who had taken Valentinian I, under his protection during the latter's minority, victoriously restored him to his rights, the following year defeating Maximus, who was captured and executed.

The holy Martin, whatever his relations with the mighty of this world, comporting himself with great humility, and abode with heart and mind in his monastery, amid the simple monks whom he had gathered around him.

At the end of his life, hearing that there had arisen a bitter controversy among the clergy of the area

around Candam, a city at the confluence of the Loire and the Vienne Rivers. Martin hastened there to restore peace between the quarreling clergymen. Summoning his monks, he foretold to them the approach of his demise and set out on the way, followed by their tears and lamentations. But even as he brought peace again to Candam, the saint contracted a severe fever and, sensing the imminence of his end, ordered his disciples to set him on the floor and cover him with a shroud and ashes, for thus, he said, should Christians die. Moreover, it seemed to him that he could see the devil nearby him. "Wherefore standest thou here, dreadful beast," the saint demanded, "Thou hast no share in me! The bosom of Abraham will receive me." These were his final words, and the brethren surrounding him were struck by the radiance and beauty of his countenance after his soul had departed. Two thousand monks and a choir of virgins accompanied his body to Caesarodunum, where he was given a solemn burial, attended by a great concourse of the people.

The holy Martin died on the 11th of November in the year 400, at the age of eighty. After the blessed repose of His favored wonder-worker, God imparted incorruption to his body, and manifold and great miracles were worked at his tomb. Bishop Perpetuus later erected over the tomb of the holy Martin a magnificent church. In time, portions of the holy one's relics were dispersed to various other churches. This proved fortuitous, for in the year 1562, the French Calvinist Protestants, known commonly as Huguenots, plundered his shrine and publicly burned his precious relics in Tours. Portions of St. Martin's sacred relics subsequently found their way back to the cathedral of Tours, however, where to this day they continue to work miracles, to the glory of God Who is ever wondrous in His saints. Amen.

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**THE "LIFE" OF SULPICIUS SEVERUS,**  
*supplemented by material from the Vitae Patrum of St. Gregory of Tours, and Henri Gheon's Life*

In the year 316 A.D., in the Roman province of Pannonia (present day Hungary) the holy Martin was born. His family was of the noble Slavic-Celtic race. His father was a respected officer of minor rank (a tribune, or commander of a legion consisting of 100 footsoldiers) in the Roman army. At the time of his birth, Christianity was still an outlawed religion and Martin's parents were considered to be "good" pagans who subscribed to the obligatory state religion. Even so, Martin at an early age began to seek out the forbidden teachings of Christ.

When he reached boyhood, Martin and his family moved to northern Italy where his father had been assigned with his legion. It was there, in the city of Ticinum, that our saint was secretly initiated as an "auditor" (a catechumen, or one who is preparing for baptism), and began in earnest to walk the Christian path. He was not yet ten years old.

The year 325 marked the emancipation of Christianity by Constantine the Great. The Christian religion, persecuted and oppressed for centuries, was suddenly free and a great blossoming and flourishing of the faith ensued. It was in these times of newfound liberty that Martin showed uncommon zeal for the solitary life of a monk. God blessed him with an insatiable thirst for the Absolute. St. Anthony the Great and St. Pachomius were his favorite solitary hermits. He decided with all his heart to become a desert monk just like them. And he probably would have, but God had his own plans for the young saint. The monk's habit had to give way to a Roman military uniform.

At that time, it was law that the sons of Roman military veterans were required to serve a lengthy term in the Roman army. Perhaps because of his reluctance to give up his life as a monk, he was first arrested and brought to the recruiting office in Chelsea. He was there only a day. Later he gave his name to his father and took his military vow, faithfully accepting his commission as a young officer. In fact, he was rapidly promoted to the elite corps of young soldiers called the cavalry of the Imperial Guard. His uniform was a dazzling full-length white cloak lined on the upper half with warm sheepskin which covered the brightly polished armor and weapons of a legionnaire. It was his sword and his pure white cavalryman's cloak which were to bring him great acclaim.

At age nineteen, Martin was sent, as a new officer, to join a combat unit in the Roman province of Gaul (France) near the town of Amiens. All officers were given an aide who was actually a slave. Holy Martin's conscience would not allow him to be a master over this slave, but neither could he reject his services and abandon him to a worse fate with some other officer. Therefore, Martin simply reversed roles with his slave. Instead of being served and pampered, as was the legitimate privilege of every Roman officer, Martin served his slave and provided for his every need. This indicates that St. Martin's spiritual fervor was not at all dampened by his military life.

His unusual behavior undoubtedly met with ridicule among his fellow soldiers. No doubt they tried often to entice Martin to quit his austerities and join them in their usual soldierly debaucheries. But Martin kept his virtues intact. Indeed, he cultivated and patiently perfected them for the sake of Jesus Christ unto Whom he had not yet even been baptized. He devoted all his free time to the reading of Holy Scripture, the lives of the saints, prayer, and visiting the sick. He was considered to be slightly mad by his peers who mocked and derided his simple piety.

When Martin was twenty-one, during an extremely severe winter, he happened upon a naked beggar near the gates of Amiens who had been neglected and despised by all who passed by. The moment our saint laid eyes on the freezing man, he responded instantly with God-inspired charity. He drew his sword and cut his beautiful, seamless white cape down the middle and gave the better half (the half lined with warm sheepskin) to the poor beggar. His peers and those who witnessed this astounding act laughed at him for his "foolishness." But some of the more sensible among them reproached themselves and lamented that they had not done likewise.

This simple act of sharing his cape with the poor man was destined to echo and re-echo down through the ages. In the person of the humble Martin, our Lord chose to instruct us all in how we ought to live with one another — to take seriously the commandment to give without expectation of return.

That night, as Martin slept, Jesus Christ appeared to him wearing the half-cloak which had covered the beggar. Then Martin heard our Redeemer's glorious voice saying to the angelic host in attendance: "Martin, still a catechumen, covered me with this cloak." This signifies that St. Martin had fulfilled the teaching of our Lord: "Whatsoever ye have done unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" [Matt 25:40]. After his visitation, Martin "flew to baptism," which most certainly took place on the night of Pascha in the year 339.

After his baptism, Martin was filled with a burning zeal to give himself fully to the service of God, but his military commission would not allow it until he had completed his term of service. Therefore, in obedience and loyalty, Martin resigned himself to combine, as best he could, the life of a Christian and that of a professional soldier.

Two years later, Martin was finally called into hostile combat to defend Gaul from an intruding army. Our saint wished nothing more than to quit his military obligations and join the unarmed army of those who renounce all to follow Christ. The thought of fighting against his neighbor was abhorrent to him. His commission had only weeks before it expired, but still his military vow obliged him to press on.

Because this was to be a decisive victory for the Roman army, the Emperor came to witness it. And it was customary for the Emperor to distribute a handsome bonus to each legionnaire before the conclusion of a successful campaign. When it came Martin's turn to receive his pay from the hands of the Emperor, he politely declined, saying that he planned to complete his commission within weeks and had decided that he would take no part in the present conflict.

The Emperor was enraged by what he thought was Martin's cowardice, and commanded that Martin be required, by force if necessary, to enter into the fight. St. Martin bravely replied: "It won't be necessary, I shall advance at the head of my legion, unarmed, in the name of Jesus Christ, without shield or helmet or any protection but the Sign of the Cross. I shall be the first into the enemy line, and that without the shadow of fear!" The Emperor, impressed by his boldness, simply replied: "I shall take you at your word; you shall not get out of it." The Emperor even had our saint locked in prison overnight to prevent his escape, revealing how little he understood Martin's true motivation.

Martin spent the whole night rapt in prayer. In the morning, when all the troops stood poised for the last bitter conflict, an envoy was sent by the opposing commander. Against all probabilities, the envoy pleaded for peace and offered the commander's sword in surrender. Many a relieved soldier, on both sides, shouted "A miracle!" But perhaps only our saint really knew how true those words of joy were.

Martin's daring virtue and persistence in prayer won a peaceful end to the war, but hidden within the saint's heart lay the secret: it was Martin's total willingness to lay down his life for Jesus Christ and his faith in His power and mercy. Even the Emperor's heart was touched, for he gave Martin an immediate release from military service. Finally free to give himself fully to the service of God, at age twenty-five, Martin stepped into his new life with great joy.

It is said that he visited the city of Trier, where he met the holy bishop St. Maximinus, and his famous guest, the exiled St. Athanasius. The latter's Latin translation of the *Life of Anthony*, the most widely read monastic hagiography in the history of the Church, must surely have come into Martin's eager hands. It is believed further that Martin was tutored personally by St. Maximinus and spent time in St. Athanasius' monastery in Worms. I could have been there at the feet of the great Athanasius, that he learned the pure monastic traditions of the eastern deserts which he endeavored to practice for the rest of his life.

After the space of several years (perhaps up to ten years) Martin attached himself as the student of the holy Bishop of Poitiers, St. Hilary. In his God-inspired humility, Martin knew that too much individualism tends to make one heady and can all too easily lead one down the path of heresy and delusion. Martin desired to fill himself with the fullness of the wisdom of the Church. For this reason, he eagerly received all with which the holy Bishop Hilary nourished him. Being the godly wise saint that he was, St. Hilary perceived in Martin a future great saint, apostle and wonderworker. Hilary was careful to nourish Martin thoroughly and methodically on the holy teachings of the Fathers and the Lives of the saints, lavishing upon him all his wisdom and knowledge in the scriptures and the care of souls.

Martin, in his extreme humility, refused even to consider ordination into the priesthood. Therefore, the wise St. Hilary ordained him an exorcist, an ordained position in the clergy, low in rank, but of great spiritual importance, since it was the exorcist's duty to pray fervently over the sick and to cast out demonic influences, a position that St. Martin could not refuse in all good conscience, being of such a minor rank. Despite Martin's humble reluctance, St. Hilary was leading him step by step to ordination into the priesthood and beyond, which was Martin's destiny, known only to God and perhaps, to his teacher, St. Hilary.

About this time, Martin received in a dream that he must see his parents once again before entering fully into the monastic life. This meant a long journey across the Alps to Pannonia (Hungary), where his parents had returned to retire at the end of his father's military career. It must have worried St. Hilary to see his beloved student leave for a long journey, even though Martin pledged to return. It must be remembered that, in fourth century Europe, a journey across the continent was a serious and dangerous undertaking. Indeed, while our saint traversed the Alps, he was attacked by a band of thieves. When they found no money on his person, they decided to murder him, lest he betray their identity to the authorities.

His captor asked Martin, "Aren't you afraid?" "Good heavens, no!" was Martin's calm answer. Our saint explained to his astonished listener that his imminent death was a great favor bestowed upon him by the mercy of God. He went on to say that he did indeed feel fear and sorrow, not for himself, though, but for his captors who were so painfully ignorant and bereft of the salvation of Jesus Christ. After a short space of time, Martin, by the power of God working in him, first got his captor interested, preaching to him the word of God and illustrating it with a stream of examples. Soon the man was pricked to the heart and finally moved to full conversion and repentance. The thief, turned debtor-to-



Christ, knelt at St. Martin's feet and received his blessing, after which Martin was released unharmed. Later, the converted thief told this miraculous conversion to Sulpicius Severus, who faithfully recorded this, one of the first of St. Martin's countless miracles.

Martin safely reached the home of his parents. He was able to comfort his aging father and mother, but he was able to persuade only his mother to accept Christ as her savior. His father remained a doubtful pagan. So strong was the power of God with Martin that, no sooner had he bid his parents farewell, than he began to bring streams of new believers to the right faith. This enraged the local adherents to the heretical Arian faction. Just like St. Paul, his enemies had him beaten with rods (a severe punishment), and forcefully expelled him from their country. Exiled and beaten, Martin's spirit remained undaunted, even when he learned that the Arian faction in Gaul had forced his beloved teacher, St. Hilary, to flee. In the face of adversity, our saint was only strengthened and relied all the more on the providence and mercy of God and the power of ceaseless prayer.

Without a home or teacher, Martin scouted near Milan and founded a small community of hermits. But soon his presence was discovered, and the Arian heretics drove him away and broke up the community. Exiled again, he took up residence with another hermit on a desolate island on the Mediterranean coast of Gaul (Isola de Galina). Little is known of his activities on the island, save that he lived as a hermit-m monk, praying without ceasing and glorifying God. Once, while on the island, Martin mistakenly ate some hellebore roots, which contain a deadly poison. He was immediately taken deathly ill, but, trusting in God's providence, began to pray in earnest. Instantly, by the power of God, the grip of the deadly poison was broken and he was completely cured, proving that he was indeed a true warrior of prayer, through his dauntless faith in Him Who overcame death.

When Martin learned that St. Hilary was back in his see in Poitiers, he gave up, probably with great reluctance, his island hermitage and rejoined his beloved teacher. St. Martin was then forty-four.

With Hilary's blessing, St. Martin established a monastery near the town of Liguge, where his fame for miraculous healings and divinely-inspired counsel began to spread far and wide. Many came also to join him in prayer and the monastic struggle. It was then that Martin, by the grace of Almighty God, raised his first man from the dead. He was to raise two more in his lifetime.

While Martin had been away on monastery business, a novice had fallen ill and died. When the saint returned, the poor man had already been dead for three days. When Martin saw him, he immediately had everyone leave the room and, following a divine inspiration, went straight into prayer. For two full hours he prayed, never wavering in his faith. Then he saw the stirrings of life come into the dead man's eyes. Soon, he who had been dead three days was up and walking among the living again, praising God and giving thanks for the miracle of life! It is recorded that, while this man slept in death, he was guided by two angels to the place of judgement where he was questioned severely for his sinful and unrepentant life. During his uncomfortable interview, two other angels approached and spoke to the angels in attendance, saying that the prayers of a certain Martin had been heard, requesting that the man be returned to him. The next thing he knew, he was being brought back to the room where he had

lain dead for three days. There he opened his eyes to behold Martin praying and giving thanks to God for the grace of His Son Jesus Christ.

News of this miracle spread like wildfire much to the discomfort of our humble saint, who only wished to resume his solitary life of prayer. But God had other plans for Martin: for soon after the first man was restored to life, he happened along a crowd of people wailing and moaning over a slave man who had hanged himself in despair. Martin felt God's prompting and, after excusing everyone from the room, he laid himself prone on the man's lifeless body. He commanded that way increase his prayer until, by the hand of God, the man arose, fully restored to life. Taking Martin's hand, he walked out to greet the astonished crowd. Such was Martin's humility that the intense fame and attention generated by these magnificent miracles only made him long the more for his beloved solitude. But he knew it was not to be, for his fame spread far, bringing countless people to the knowledge of salvation. Reluctantly but obediently, Martin accepted his destiny.

During his years at the monastery in Liguge, St. Martin was ordained into the holy priesthood, probably at the persistent entreaty of his fellow monks and, especially, St. Hilary, his beloved teacher and bishop.

Around 370, the nearby town of Tours lost its bishop, and the immediate talk among all the people was "Martin, the wonderworker from Liguge." This news horrified the humble monk Martin, and he refused all petitions from the people of Tours. But such was their desire for Martin that they devised a trick for our saint, undoubtedly inspired by the Lord.

A man came to Martin's door on bended knee, telling him of his dying wife and begging the saint to come and attend to her himself. In full innocence of heart, Martin agreed and set off for Tours. While on the highway he was "ambushed" by a band of citizens from town who laid hold of him and brought him to Tours as their "captain" and new bishop. Seeing the hand of God in it, Martin submitted. Our saint was used to the life of a hermit monk and looked the part. He entered the town of Tours tattered and unwashed, looking like a shaggy bundle of rags. The town clergy complained, saying that such a one was not fit for the rank of bishop. But the people answered, "To be better combed, he only needs a hairdresser. But to be more holy and mortified, the rest of you would need a taste of his poverty. It is for his poverty that we are taking him." After much persuasion and confirmation in prayer, St. Martin consented and was duly ordained and made Bishop of Tours.

It was no ordinary bishop who took up the shepherd's crozier. Dressed still as a simple monk, he lived in a tiny room right next to the apse of the church. There he maintained his full monastic practice and refused all the usual privileges of the bishop's rank. But when he stepped forth to preach in the cathedral of Tours, all doubts evaporated. Although simple and unassuming in appearance, his preaching dazzled his listeners with the power and force that only a true apostle of heavenly grace can perform. Because of humble Martin's presence, Tours was soon transformed into a beacon of blazing light that reached to all parts of Gaul and even beyond.

The incessant pressure and rigors of the life of a bishop soon forced Martin to find himself a place of solitude where he could give himself to prayer without distraction, for our saint could not find it in his loving heart to turn anyone away who sought his help and prayers, no matter what time of the day or night they came knocking at his door or tugging at his sleeve. So Martin made himself a secret hermitage in the very caves where St. Gaius (one of the first missionaries to Gaul, near the end of the first century) himself had lived in a cliff overlooking the Loire River. One can imagine the spiritual joy our saint found in his new monastic paradise. His solitude was not long lived, however, for the Lord brought to him many young men and women eager to give all and follow after Christ with Martin as their guide.

Unable to turn away even a single penitent, Martin founded the great Monastery of Marmoutiers for the men and, for the women, he founded a convent not far away. The monastery swelled in numbers and soon had its own church where the divine services were sung night and day, and its own seminary where an endless stream of seekers came to be instructed by the saint himself. Many bishops, hundreds of priests, thousands of monks and nuns, countless numbers of pilgrims and saints, sat at Martin's feet and were educated at the Seminary of Marmoutiers. Later, Martin also founded an orphanage and a school whose doors were never barred to anyone who wished to be nourished in faith, piety and wisdom.

But the establishment of Marmoutiers was just the beginning of wonders! Soon missionaries, ordained and blessed by St. Martin, went forth into all corners of Gaul and further to found monasteries, convents and churches. Thousands were converted from the pagan religions to Christ. Martin himself made hundreds of missionary journeys which he continued to do even to the day of his passing, so great was his burning zeal to preach the wondrous good news of redemption and to bring all to baptism. Not only did he go and seek out the lost sheep of Christ, but he devised a system of parishes whereby the faithful were gathered around a priest or monk left by St. Martin to tend the flock and administer the Holy Sacraments. This system of organization is the very pattern still followed today throughout the world.

Throughout his lifetime, St. Martin left behind a treasurehouse of miracles and healings. In this short account, we can only speak of a few. Perhaps the most famous miracle, second only to the sharing of his cloak with the beggar, was the miracle of the felled tree. The tree in question was a huge pine tree which the inhabitants of a small village came to worship and venerate as the very abode of one of their pagan gods. At the prompting of the Holy Spirit, St. Martin commanded that the tree be cut down and used as timber for the soon-to-be-erected chapel, which the saint would dedicate to Christ.

A few of the more stubborn pagans were enraged by St. Martin's boldness and, determined to defend the pagan religion, challenged him. They cried that if St. Martin desired that the tree be felled, they themselves would lay their axes to the trunk on condition that Martin stand directly in its path of descent. In their conceit, they cried: "You are always saying that the Lord is with you. Therefore, take no risk nothing. He will keep the tree from falling on you. If you refuse to take the risk, it means that you have no confidence in Him. If so, why do you want us to renounce our own god and have more confidence in yours than you have yourself?"

Without hesitation came Martin's reply "I accept." So they stood him there, armed only with his faith directly in the path on which the tree must surely fall. To make sure, ropes were attached to the upper branches to guide the falling giant down to where Martin stood, rap, in prayer. A very large crowd gathered to witness the spectacle. The axemen worked in earnest and the tree began to sway. The axes swung faster, the ropes tied to the tree to guide its fall, strained taut. There was first a crack, then the giant pine began to fall over slowly toward our saint at prayer. His enemies were exultant and his friends were pale and anguished as they watched the towering tree topple with a great noise.

Everyone had lost all hope that Martin would not be crushed to death. But Bishop Martin at that moment simply raised his hand and made the Sign of the Cross in the air. Instantly, the pine tree fell backward as if caught in an enormous whirlwind and fell to the ground on the opposite side. Such was St. Martin's faith that he changed the course of the felled tree, but such was his love that he prayed that the tree would be slowed in its descent so as not to injure a single one of the astounded spectators, and so it was to the glory of God.

Time and again, St. Martin risked his life for the poor and the persecuted. On one occasion, a Roman governor had terrorized the countryside, murdering, stealing, and forcing many into slavery. Like the true shepherd that he was, Martin immediately went and sought entrance to the governor's palace. But it being past midnight, the palace servants refused to allow him in. Not defeated in the least, Martin prostrated himself then and there before the barred door and prayed to God. At that moment, the governor, deep in sleep, was woken awake by a radiant angel who said to the terrified man, "The servant of God is lying on your threshold and you sleep!" Deeply troubled, the governor told his servants that St. Martin was at the gate and that they should run quickly and let him in. But the servants laughed at this "dream" and hardly went beyond the inner door before returning. They fled to the governor, saying that they found no one at the door. At that, the governor returned to bed, but soon the angel shook him awake, much more vigorously this time, and said as before that the holy St. Martin was at his gate. This time, the terrified prince went himself, and unbarred the outer door to find our saint prostrate in prayer. Without a moment's delay, the cruel governor's heart was rent and he ordered the immediate release of all the prisoners he had taken. The account of this miracle, we might add, was handed down by the mouth of the penitent governor himself, (Avitusus).

On another occasion, our saint, in order to procure the freedom of a band of enslaved people, demanded an audience with the Gothic Emperor Valentinian. The Emperor ignored him and, after the second refusal, St. Martin began to pray. He denied himself food and drink, clothed himself in sackcloth, covered himself with ashes, and remained constantly in prayer for seven full days. On the seventh day, an angel appeared, as was almost commonplace with St. Martin, and delivered the message that he should go to the palace without delay. In full faith, Martin set out and found that the solidly barred palace gates opened for him. Not a guard or servant even took notice of him, just as it happened once before to St. Peter when he was freed from prison with the aid of an angel. He easily found his way without any resistance to the Emperor's quarters. When the Emperor saw him, he ground his teeth in rage. Although surprised, he still refused to rise and acknowledge the holy bishop, nor did he invite him to sit. But the power of God intervened and the Emperor suddenly leapt up in pain, because the seat of his chair, from which he had so stubbornly refused to rise, had miraculously caught fire!

Overcome by God's obvious chastisement, Valentinian saw his errors, repented of them, and granted whatever St. Martin needed. From that time on, the Emperor was a great friend of our saint.

The holy Church has proclaimed St. Martin to be "equal to the apostles" because he converted whole nations to the true faith. Here is one miraculous account of his great apostolate. In the region of northern Gaul (near present-day Vendôme), still entirely pagan and wild, Martin encountered an unruly crowd of peasants. He felt the strange and wonderful vibrancy which he knew to be the stirrings of the Holy Spirit. He began to preach in an angelic voice: "How can so great a crowd of souls not know the Lord our Savior?" Just at the moment, a bereaved woman thrust through the crowd bearing the lifeless body of her child in her arms. She held it out to St. Martin and cried: "You are God's friend, we know. Give me back my son! He is my only son!" Martin took the child in his arms and knelt down and prayed to God. The crowd fell utterly silent and Martin and the boy, now alive, rose to give glory to God! The entire group cried out that Christ was God, and threw themselves at our saint's feet, demanding that he make them all Christians at once! Without hesitation, St. Martin baptized them one and all, right there in the field where the miracle had occurred.

On another journey, Martin met a young Roman senator in the Gallic town of Vienna. The senator, Paulinus by name, contracted a disease of the eyes and a white film began to grow over his eyes, plunging him into almost total blindness. Martin simply bathed his eyes with a sponge and an instantaneous and wonderful miracle occurred. Paulinus' sight was completely restored! History will attest that Paulinus thereafter renounced his wealth and rank and moved with his wife to Nolan(?), Italy, where he was to become a very famous and holy bishop and was to be finally crowned with sainthood. Even before St. Paulinus' conversion, St. Martin, being clairvoyant, knew he was to become a great saint, for he said, "Happy is the generation that has received so fine a lesson in faith and virtue." St. Paulinus, in turn, regarded St. Martin as his "father in grace." When Martin's friend and biographer, Sulpicius Severus, published the *Life of St. Martin*, St. Paulinus had countless copies made and distributed them far and wide. He continued his veneration of his "father in grace" up to his dying days.

Countless were the miracles that followed St. Martin. Many times, saints and angels appeared to him to give healing and advice, including the Most Holy Mother of God, and also St. Agnes, St. Thecla, and even Saints Peter and Paul.

St. Martin never ceased from his superhuman work of bishop, apostle, and monk. Even in the last years of his life, he continued to "press on toward the mark" with all his heart. When he was over eighty years old, Martin heard the news that his priests and clergy in the parish of Candes were quarreling and threatening damage to the concord of the Church. He went to heal the dissension, armed only with the faith and Christ's words: "Love one another." The dissent was soon completely healed at Candes, but our saint was destined to travel no more in his earthly body. Having fought the good fight to the end, St. Martin submitted joyfully to his Master's summons to leave this world and join Him in heaven. His devoted disciples crowded around him and said: "Why, Father, do you forsake us? To whom are you leaving us when you are gone? We know that you want to go to Christ, but your reward is sure,



you will be no worse for a slight delay. Have pity on us; do not leave us." Martin, then, moved to tears, prayed aloud. "Lord, if I am still necessary to my people, I do not refuse the labor." But the Lord chose peace for His beloved servant and he remained on earth for but a few more days. Even to his last breath St. Martin refused any earthly comfort. He rendered his soul unto the Lord clothed in sackcloth and lying on the hard floor strewn with ashes. Those standing by at the moment of his passing into heaven saw his face transfigured in a light "as white as snow."

The day of his passing was Sunday, the hour midnight, on November 8 around the year 395. At the hour of his translation into heaven, many people witnessed beautiful, angelic singing. Even some who lived hundreds of miles away were vouchsafed a miraculous hearing of the angelic heralds proclaiming the saint's sweet passing into heaven.

St. Martin is one of the greatest saints ever to glorify God. While he walked on the earth, untold miracles testified to his sanctity. His very life and manner have etched the spirit of the teachings of Christ into the soul of mankind so deeply that time cannot disunghuish nor doubts tarnish them. The great stroke of his sword that split his soldier's cloak did not merely give comfort to a needy beggar. That "finest of sword strokes that ever a soldier made" carved into every human heart an indelible image of the love of Christ. Martin gave himself so completely to his beloved Lord that one can scarcely discern between the two. One who loved so completely, one cannot keep from loving.

St. Martin was buried in Tours in the cemetery of the poor on November 11. It is on this day that the holy feast of St. Martin (or Martinmas) is held each year (on the western calendar; the Orthodox Church celebrates the Commemoration of St. Martin on 12 October). On St. Martin's day, we celebrate an autumnal feast of hope. We taste the wine of the last gathering, we build fires of autumn leaves on the hills, outstanding claims and debts are settled, and new resolutions are solemnly made, while we feast in honor of the saint, wonderworker, monk and equal to the apostles, Martin the holy Bishop of Tours and Enlightener of Gaul.

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## **In Holy Memory of His Grace Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereyaslavka**

**On the One Hundredth Anniversary of His Birth: 1872-1972**

**by Archbishop Averky**

*(continued from Volume VIII No. 4)*

A simple believer, the Siberian peasant Gregory Novykh, who soon received the nickname Rasputin ("dissolute one"), drew near to the throne. The leftist revolutionary groups which plotted to overthrow the royal throne and to destroy Russia made cunning use of him for their satanic aims. In a whole series of memoirs published on the Russian revolution, Vladika Theophan's name is connected with Rasputin's, implying that it was he who brought Rasputin to the palace and recommended him to the Empress. Yet no one ascribed this to Vladika as a crime, rather they explained that, due to his extraordinary moral purity, he did not understand what sort of a man this Gregory was. Even as it is, this explanation is precious to us.

Vladika Theophan himself, however, quite decisively stated that it was certainly not he who brought Rasputin to the palace and that he had by no means recommended him. That was purely a matter of misinformation, which doubtless concealed an ulterior motive, that of slandering Vladika, who was crystal-pure and guiltless. A special commission, appointed by the Provisional Government in 1917 and headed by V. M. Rudnev, officially established that Vladika Theophan did not in any way participate in the Rasputin affair. When there were spread about unkind and libellous rumors, deliberately exaggerated by the leftist groups which were preparing a revolutionary takeover in Russia, Vladika Theophan, cautious and tactful as ever, warned the Royal Family that this affair might have serious consequences. Vladika Theophan's testimony that Rasputin was at the palace only very rarely indicates the extent to which the whole affair was blown out of proportion by ill-intentioned factions. Rasputin was called in to visit the ailing Tsarevich and heir, Alexey Nikolaevich, because he had an incredible talent for "casting spells" on the Tsarevich's blood when he had serious hemorrhages which medical science was unable to cure. It is well known that in Russia there were indeed peasants endowed with a mysterious ability to "cast spells on blood," truly causing it to stop flowing. Rasputin's supposed "influence" was, however, greatly exaggerated. It is not surprising that the Empress was favorably inclined toward a man who saved the precious life of her only and ardently beloved son, heir to the throne!

Vladika Theophan's warnings, though, had unfortunate consequences for him. As a result, his enemies and those who envied him tried to remove him from the Royal Family. In 1910 he was transferred to the Crimea, far from Petersburg, and appointed to the Tavricheskaya-Simferopolskaya diocese. Throughout the rest of his life he suffered greatly on account of this severance of relations with the Royal Family which he loved deeply and ardently. For a long time, he did not even wish to believe that the Ekaterinburg tragedy had taken place, as indeed many refused to believe it at first.

Only two years later, in 1912, Vladika was transferred to the Astrakhan diocese, where he soon won

great love and reverence among the faithful masses. One year later, in 1913, he was again transferred this time from Astrakhan to Poltava, and shortly thereafter was raised to the rank of Archbishop. On many occasions we met Poltavians who remembered with great reverence and sincere compunction their wonderful archpastor, who was truly other worldly. In Poltava many events took place from which one can discern the spiritual heights achieved by our Vladika, who was vouchsafed clairvoyance and revelations from God.

In Poltava, there lived a particularly pious man and wife who were exceptionally devoted to Vladika Theophan. When the husband reposed, the widow, who was in indescribable grief, asked Vladika whether he could tell her what sort of fate her husband had encountered after death. Vladika replied that perhaps in a while he would be able to give her an answer. Vladika prayed that this might be revealed to him, and shortly thereafter he comforted the widow and told her that her husband was beloved by God.

Prince Zhevakhov, who later became Bishop Ioasaph, asked Vladika Theophan about the fate after death of the bishop of Belgorod, who was found hanged in the restroom of his bishop's residence. Had his soul perished? Vladika Theophan answered that the bishop had not perished since he had not taken his own life, for this was the work of demons. It turned out that the building had been renovated and that formerly there had been a house church there. The godless builders had blasphemously put in a restroom where the altar and throne had formerly stood. When holy places are desecrated or murders or suicides are committed, God's grace is withdrawn and demons settle in such places. It was hard to say whether the bishop was guilty of blasphemy or not, but at any rate he was the victim of demons. There were also some cases of miraculous cures that occurred subsequent to Vladika Theophan's prayers.

Archbishop Theophan's meeting with a group of renovationist clergy and liberal professors, who came to the Moscow All Russian Council of 1917-1918, was a remarkable event. Vladika himself often liked to recall the conversation he had with those modernist churchmen who fought for modernization of the Church and for changes in keeping with the spirit of the times. These modernists approached Vladika very politely and reverently, obviously sensing his great spiritual authority.

"We honor you, Vladika," they said. "We recognize your ecclesiastical wisdom. . . But the waves of time flow so swiftly, changing everything, changing us. We must yield to them. You, too, Vladika, must yield to these waves which overtake us. Otherwise, what company will you have? You will be alone." "What company will I have?" Vladika answered them succinctly, "I will be in the company of the Saint Prince Vladimir, Enlightener of Rus. Of Saints Anthony and Theodosius, the miracle-workers of the Caves, of the pastors and miracle-workers of Moscow. Of Saints Sergius and Seraphim, of all the holy Martyrs, Saints, pastors and miracle-workers who have shone forth in the Russian land. And you, brothers, in whose company will you be, despite your multitudes, if you give yourselves over to the will of the waves of time? These waves have already carried you off to the anarchy of Kerenskyism and soon you will be engulfed by the yoke of the cruel Lenin, for they will deliver you into the claws of the red beast." These modernists of the Church withdrew from Vladika in silence, having received this decisive answer.

In Poltava, after the revolution had taken place, Vladika Theophan suffered a great deal on account of the Ukrainian separatists who had taken control there, and who even put Vladika in prison because he absolutely refused to perform a special pannihida for Ivan Mazepa in the cathedral in Poltava.

In 1920 Archbishop Theophan, who had become a member of the Higher Church Administration, formed according to the decree of His All-Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and the Holy Synod (No. 362, November 7/20, 1920), found himself among other Russian hierarchs in Constantinople. In 1921 he and all of the Administration were invited by the Serbian Patriarch Demetrius to move to Yugoslavia (then the Kingdom of Serbia), and during that same year he participated in the First Council of Russian Bishops Outside Russia, held in Sremski-Karlovci.

In 1922, when Moscow, obviously under pressure from the Bolsheviks, declared the Higher Church Administration abolished and the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia was formed on the basis of the same decree of Patriarch Tikhon, Archbishop Theophan became one of the senior members of this Synod, and at times even sat in for the Chairman, Metropolitan Anthony, as his substitute. He resided in Yugoslavia until 1925.

We have every reason to consider Vladika Theophan one of the most important, consistent, and strongly principled ideologues of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. His ideology was based on strict and uncompromising preservation of the Holy Orthodox Faith; unconditional rejection not only of obvious heresies, but also of every sort of modernism, free-thinking and liberalism which undermine our Holy Faith and which strive to make of it "salt which has lost its savor"; and refusal to accept the God-hating regime which has enslaved our homeland and which endeavors to uproot Christian Faith and morality from our Orthodox Russians.

Archbishop Theophan was the first to expose and document the anti-Christian nature of certain so-called Christian organizations, some of which were eager to extend their influence to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, and even to subjugate it to themselves somewhat by rendering financial assistance much needed by our refugees who had no stable sources of their own to draw from in exile. Vladika Theophan himself categorically refused to accept the monthly allowance offered to him by these organizations, and did not approve of those who did, for he believed that this caused them to lose their spiritual freedom, and that in one way or another they would consequently be forced to do the will of their sponsors. Vladika Theophan guarded his independence and spiritual freedom, preferring a beggarly existence to a secure situation. This discloses the most characteristic trait of our great pastor, a trait which he shared with the great Fathers of Christian antiquity: any compromise of conscience, no matter how small, was for him altogether inconceivable. In all of his actions and conduct, in his private life as well as in his service to the Church and society, he was utterly constant, never departing in any way from what his convictions dictated. Absolute incorruptibility, uncompromising honesty and straightforwardness, demand for unconditional loyalty to the true Church, to the Word of God, and to Patristic tradition — these were his hallmarks, ideals which guided his life and which he liked to see in other servants of the Church as well.

He regarded with great alarm and distrust the actions of the former member of our Church's Synod, Metropolitan Eulogius, who opened a school in Paris named "The Institute of Theology" and refused to place it under the control of our Higher Church Administration, even though this would have been the logical and correct thing to do. He also questioned the school's sources of financial support. He was surprised that they had not invited as professors of this theological school distinguished scholars of theology of which there were many abroad, but in their stead had appointed many people who had no degree in theology to lecture there. What surprised him most was that the man who held a post of such importance and responsibility as professor of Dogmatic Theology was a former professor of political economics, a man who had entered the priesthood after the revolution — Archpriest Sergius Bulgakov. Vladimir Theophan was indescribably disturbed when the latter began to preach the "Sophian" heresy and published a whole series of books on dogmatic theology in which he set forth his "Sophian" ideas. Here is how Vladimir quite succinctly yet lucidly answered a question put to him about "Sophianism" and about Father Florensky's book "The Pillar and Affirmation of the Truth" in a letter:

"It would be impossible to write a refutation of Fr. Florensky's book in a single letter. The basic idea of the book is complex. In order to write a refutation it would be necessary to digress on various spheres of knowledge, not only in the field of dogma, but also in that of philosophy, philology, and ecclesiastical archeology. Archpriest Bulgakov himself admitted in his book "Twilight" that his teaching about Sophia traces its roots to Florensky. This of course does not mean that he reiterated the latter's teaching, but if you want objective testimony to this, I can cite Prof. Lossky and Florensky as well. According to articles printed in Russia during his lifetime in the "Student Bulletin," Fr. Florensky required his students of theology to study two books for his examinations, his "The Pillar and Affirmation of the Truth" and Bulgakov's "Twilight." This means that he considered these books to be related to each other. But anyone who has studied this matter cannot be satisfied to leave it at this, since it is evident that Florensky's ideas were not unprecedented. His 'sophiology' was modeled after Solovyev's sophiology, which was in turn rooted in and based on the 'sophiology' of German mystics, a teaching which is not upheld by the Church." (letter #15, dated 7/6, 1931)

It must be emphasized that Archbishop Theophan had from his early youth engaged in reading and intensive study of the Holy Fathers of the Church and that he had mastered the philosophical doctrines of the Orthodox Church. Thus all kinds of faddish extremism were equally alien to him. This included both the unhealthy mysticism of the West and the liberal rationalism which strive to explain and make comprehensible to our limited human mind the ineffable Mysteries of God which, as the Word of God teaches, only "the angels desire to look into" (1 Peter 1:12), but even they can merely bow reverently before these Mysteries.

Vladimir Theophan always remembered that our human mind, flawed by its fallen nature, is a "tricksy one," as Theophan the Recluse liked to say, and that if one relies on it too much, it can easily become, as another outstanding theologian, Bishop John of Smolensk put it, "Christ's new traitor. His new betrayer."

All the fundamental truths of our Holy Orthodox Christian faith are God's Mysteries, great and beyond the grasp of our mind. Recall what the Apostle Paul said about one of these great Mysteries: the incarnation of the Son of God: "Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim 3:16). Therefore, any attempt to explain the Mysteries and make them comprehensible to our mind is a hopeless task which conceals in itself the danger of altogether departing from the truth and falling into delusion. All of the great and essential doctrines of our Faith can be grasped not by the mind, but by a believing heart.

Not everybody appreciated Vladika Theophan's strict stance on genuine Patristic Orthodoxy, undistorted by individual interpretation. Thus, aside from his many admirers he had quite a few enemies. As always happens in such cases, his enemies did not refrain from slandering Vladika and blackening his name in every way in an attempt to undermine his great authority. There were even several articles printed in Russian emigre newspapers containing altogether absurd fabrications about Vladika. Although at times this annoyed him, he did not allow these attacks to disturb him, and continued firmly and with conviction to follow the straight path in the service of Truth.

As a member of the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia and at times even acting as the Chairman, substituting for Metropolitan Anthony, he rendered unequalled service to our Church by fully exposing and documenting the antichristian activities of certain international organizations. These organizations attempted to include the Church in their sphere of influence and thus render the Church harmless both to themselves and to the dark forces which labor intensely to prepare the whole world to welcome the imminent reign of the Antichrist. After destroying the Orthodox Russian tsarist state which stood in the way of their diabolical plans, they concentrated all of their attention on the Russian Church Outside of Russia. They achieved significant success in this endeavor, for in 1926 they provoked a painful schism in our Church, involving Metropolitan Eulogius in Western Europe and Metropolitan Platon in the United States of America. Vladika Theophan foresaw all of this, he warned and admonished, but his warnings were not heeded in time and the subsequent reproach of those who broke away not only had no positive results, but even deepened the division, as Vladika had also foreseen. Such ecclesiastical schisms and divisions caused Vladika to sorrow in his heart, to suffer in his soul and to grieve. Although he had at the very beginning identified the root of the problem, he did not always approve of the measures taken to stop the schisms and establish unity in the Church, and he indicated the errors sometimes made in so doing.

In 1925 he was invited to live in Bulgaria, where he settled and resided until 1931. The Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, which counted among its members two metropolitans who had graduated from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy during Vladika's tenure there as Director, gave him two cells in the Synod House in Sofia.

It was touching to see the attention and profound reverence which our brothers the Bulgarians showed Archbishop Theophan. He frequently served in the majestic Church of St. Alexander Nevsky which was erected in memory of the liberation of Bulgaria from the Turkish yoke. It stood on the enormous square adjacent to the Synod House and could accommodate 7,000 faithful. Occasionally, and especially during Great Lent, he served even in the Synod "paraklis" — the small house church in the

Synod House. Those who participated in his spiritually replete and profoundly prayerful services even today remember them with compunction. For example, this is how the present Director of the Sofia Theological Academy, at that time a young hierodeacon who served at the Synod, recently described his recollections of Vladika's services in a letter:

"It is with particular pleasure that I recall attending the Lenten services which were performed more than forty years ago by the memorable Archbishop Theophan in the Synod paraklis in Sofia. I recall as well my confessions with Vladika Theophan. The past is unforgettable, but alas, we cannot bring it back!"

Indeed, Vladika Theophan made a deep impression as a man of genuinely saintly life on all foreigners who came in contact with him. The enemy, however, takes up arms against such saintly people and makes a special effort to pour out on them all his diabolical malice with the help of malevolent and depraved individuals who are devoted to his service. Thus in Sofia, due to various unfortunate events in the local Russian Church, Vladika Theophan had to suffer much grief simply because he was a strict ascetic and an uncompromising Archpastor. Consequently he withdrew more and more from the world and its raging passions and began to retire into himself, leading what was already virtually the life of a recluse. For some time, however, he continued to participate in the sessions of the Synod, periodically traveling to Yugoslavia for this purpose.

Soon, though, it became clear to him that he could not remain "in the world" and that he would have to follow the example of the great pastor and ascetic whose name he received in tonsure. His Grace Theophan the Recluse of Vishenki. He did, in fact, begin to withdraw more and more from the world and gradually even stopped traveling to the Synod. He did, however, participate in the 1927 Council of Bishops at which the epistle of Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhegorod, calling for recognition of the God-hating regime in Russia as an "authority established by God" was decisively rejected.

Here is what he wrote about this in one of his letters in answer to the question "What is at stake here and what should our attitude toward it be?"

"It is utterly impossible to accept Metropolitan Sergius' epistle as binding. The Council of Bishops which recently adjourned rejected this epistle. This is the proper action, based on the Holy Fathers' teaching that one is obliged to recognize only those legitimate authorities which Christians must obey. St. Isidore of Pelusium, in pointing out the hierarchy established by God and omnipresent in the life of all speaking and non-speaking beings, concludes:

"Therefore we are correct in stating that this matter includes the authorities, that is the leaders and royal authorities established by God. But if some villainous criminal seizes authority, then we do not profess that he was installed by God, rather we say that he has been *allowed* to spew out this evil, like Pharaoh, and, in such an instance, to carry out severe punishment or to chastise those for whom great cruelty is required, as when the King of Babylon chastised the Jews" (Works, No. II, letter 6)

"The Bolshevik authorities are in essence antichristian and there is no way that they can be recognized

as being established by God" (letter No. 9, dated 8/31-9/1/1927).

Vladika also grieved over all the unnecessary events which took place in the Russian emigré community. Most detrimental were all the arguments and disputes which, as he put it, were not befitting of Orthodox Russians who, because of their sins, had lost their homeland and were sentenced to live in exile, in some cases in extremely difficult material and moral circumstances. He altogether disapproved of the idea of proclaiming a Russian Emperor outside of Russia, or a "Patriarch of Russia" or even a "substitute Patriarch," notions which were widely circulated by certain individuals. He believed that Russia would soon be resurrected, but only on the condition that the whole nation should *repent* for its grave sin of Apostasy before God. He considered our life in exile as nothing other than an opportunity for fervent *repentance* and prayer for God's forgiveness. This is why many of the events that occurred during our life in exile gave him pain and sorrow and forced him to avoid close contact with people. Neither could he engage in any kind of social interaction in which he did not observe the repentance which should be evident in our people, to whom God had given the penance of banishment. Vladika Theophan never went out of his cell in the Synod House except to go to church, nor did he receive anyone there save a few individuals who were deeply devoted to him and sought his instructions and spiritual guidance.

Every summer he moved from Sofia to the coastal city of Varna, where a group of his admirers rented him a modest cottage about five kilometers from town. The cottage was located in a very isolated and relatively uninhabited spot. There Vladika lived alone with his cell-attendant as in a skete, daily performing the whole cycle of services and, in place of the Liturgy, the reader's service. Only on certain Sundays and on major holy days did he ride to church in a carriage. Usually he went to the Russian Church of Athanasius of Alexandria, an ancient Greek Church which was put at the disposal of the Russians by the Bulgarian Metropolitan Symeon of Varna and Preslav.

Here Vladika worked especially hard on his dogmatic, exegetic and ascetic spiritual writings. Himself a profound and refined expert of Patristics, he compiled a new edition of the "Dobrotolyubie" (Philokalia), organized according to a system which he worked out, which was very practical and handy to use. He also compiled a "Dobrotolyubie of Russian Saints," wrote a very interesting and original interpretation of Revelation, and many other things as well. In addition he conducted extensive correspondence with his spiritual children. His letters contained penetrating spiritual advice and instructions which were always accompanied by citations from the Holy Scriptures and numerous quotations from the Holy Fathers. They were reminiscent of the correspondence of Bishop Theophan the Recluse, and constitute a precious guide on all matters of morality and spirituality. They are still awaiting publication. It would be a great loss for all those interested in the spiritual life if this treasure were to be left under a bushel and thus allowed to eventually perish into oblivion.

Most astonishing of all were Vladika's labors of prayer, to which he devoted himself literally day and night. It was obvious that he never gave up the prayer "of the mind in the heart," following the legacy of the Holy Fathers. He was often so deep in contemplation that it seemed to him that all the visible world around him had ceased to exist. Prayer without ceasing was indeed vital to his spirit, which abode on high.



As early as 1928 Vladika Theophan wrote to one of his spiritual children "I would like to retreat in silence from all things and from henceforth but I do not yet know whether this is God's will." In 1931 he left Bulgaria and moved to France, where certain of his spiritual children had been inviting him to come ever since he left Petersburg. At first he lived with them in the little town of Clamart near Paris, and then he moved to Lameray on the Loire which is several hours' ride from Paris. There he began to live as a complete recluse, having utterly severed all ties with the outside world. There he daily performed the Liturgy in a house church constructed for him. Only a very few of his spiritual children were fortunate enough to receive letters from him for yet a little while. From these few letters one can discern the marvellous insight and revelations he had. It is important to note that all that he said and wrote did and still is coming true, precisely as he predicted.

Vladika Theophan gave a marvellous answer to an individual who asked him about the future fate of our Russian homeland. This is what Vladika wrote to him:

"You ask about the near future and the last days. I will not speak on my own authority but will inform you of the revelations of the Elders. They have communicated to me the following: The coming of the antichrist is approaching and is very near. The time separating it from the present can be counted in years, being at most several decades. But before the coming of the antichrist, Russia shall of course be restored for a short time. And in Russia there shall be a tsar prechosen by the Lord Himself. He will be a man of flaming faith, of intellectual genius, and of iron will. This is what has been revealed about him.

"We wait for the revelation to be fulfilled. Judging from the many signs, this time is coming, provided only that because of our sins our Lord God does not revoke and alter what has been promised. According to the Word of God, this can indeed happen.

It is a great misfortune that we have no exact and reliable information about Vladika Theophan's last years and his repose because those who attached themselves to him and cared for him died before he did. We know only that during the last years of his life he lived as a true recluse in certain 'caves' having definitively broken all ties with the world.

There has been preserved only this narrative of a priest, Father Theophore I, who relates:

"Vladika reposed during the German occupation on February 6-9, 1940 in the town of Lameray on the Loire river in France. There was a small, modest grave in the village's old Catholic cemetery on a hill. Close to the cemetery there was a small, simple wooden church about a quarter of a mile away. How quiet it was and solemn! There was an Orthodox cross with a name and dates. We served a pannikhida with candles and had some of the brethren' obedience of him and were perhaps secretly censured. We went home in peace. The village was about two or three miles from the place where the bishop had lived in the thick caves among the rocks. There were three elongated and high-ceilinged caves hewn out there, and the monks in them prayed the lives of Saints Paul of Thebes and Anthony the Great. In one cave was a small chapel and house church. The other caves served as storehouses. In the orchard here were fruit trees and well-kept vine and saffron fields. I produced

a strong and aromatic wine. There was also well-churned butter made for sale, milk, cheese, etc. In Vladika's cell there were two photographs of him, a Bible with dried flowers gathered at the ditch surrounding Diveyevo and other sacred things between the pages, a box with relics, perhaps as many as twenty-four of them in little gold vessels, and many other holy things. "

This is all that we have been able to discover about the completion of Vladika Theophan's earthly path and all that has remained on earth of this wondrous bishop who was so inconsonant with the terrible modern epoch of Apostasy.

Somewhere, if they have not been destroyed, are his priceless written works, sent after his death for some unknown reason—as it was mentioned in the press, to the Soviet Patriarch Alexey in Moscow. Will they ever be released to the world?

His memory is eternal in the hearts of all true Orthodox Russian believers who knew and honored him!

—Archbishop Averky

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE LIFE OF ARCHBISHOP THEOPHAN  
IN THE PERSONAL LETTERS OF INDIVIDUALS  
WHO KNEW HIM WELL

"When he was seven years old, Vladika Theophan had a dream in which he stood on the high place in church and his father, who was a priest, came up to him and burned incense before him. In the morning he told this dream to his mother. His father, who was sitting in the next room, heard this and said: 'So we've a new Joseph here.' But the dream came true. When Vladika Theophan was ordained Bishop in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, he stood, as is the custom, on the high place, and his father, who participated in the service, walked up and burned incense before him."

Vladika Theophan was a brilliant student at the Theological Academy and soon after he completed his coursework he became a monk and a professor at the Academy. He led a strict ascetic life, yet was constantly in the public eye. Once he began to wonder whether it was proper for a monk to pay attention to his external appearance, and he decided to go to Valaam to seek the advice of a certain elder who was at that time well known for his spirituality.

"The elder received him in his cell with great joy, asked him to sit down and said: 'Wait just a minute!' Then he took a mirror, stood it up on the table, took a comb, neatly combed his hair and then turned to Hieromonk Theophan and said: 'Well, now we can talk!'"

Vladika Theophan was assigned to serve in Astrakhan, where the flock became very fond of him. When he was transferred to Poltava and was leaving Astrakhan there occurred an unprecedented and

impressive event which itself gives testimony to the largeness and spirituality of his soul and to his relationship as a pastor to his flock. First, the people in Astrakhan resolutely protested his transfer to Poltava. When, however, he had to leave anyway, an enormous crowd of people gathered at the station and several hundred people lay down on the rails in front of the locomotive so that the train could not move. It was several hours before the railroad was finally cleared. Personally, I think this was the most impressive event of his life. The people, his flock, sensed and understood the elevated state of his soul, the soul of their archpastor, and they gave witness to this their love and understanding, perhaps in a very primitive way, but with all their souls, all their minds and all their hearts. No one has ever heard of any similar event anywhere!"

#### THE TESTIMONY OF L. V. I. THE WIFE OF A PROFESSOR OF THE POLTAVA SEMINARY

In 1915 her son, whose fiancée was in Poltava, arrived on leave from fighting in the war. His leave was to end during the week of Pascha. The young couple wanted to be married before the groom left. L. V. knew Vladika Theophan well, and he loved the whole family dearly. L. V. went to Vladika and asked him to bless their wedding during the week of Pascha. Vladika, always loving and ready to help anyone who asked him, was this time gloomy and preoccupied and said that he wanted to take a look at the canons and then would give his answer.

Several days later the groom's mother went to Vladika again. Vladika was very downcast and said firmly, "No, I cannot bless a marriage at this time because the Church does not allow it and misfortune will befall the pair if they do not obey." The mother became extremely distressed and said many unkind things to Vladika. She thought that because Vladika was a strict ascetic, he did not understand life and was being too severe.

In spite of the prohibition, a priest was found who performed the wedding. After they were married, the young officer departed, leaving his wife in Poltava. From that very moment, every trace of him was lost, and despite the efforts of his mother and young wife, nobody could tell them anything about his whereabouts.

While telling this story, L. V. wept miserably. She said that the bride was in a terrible state. There was another man whom she could have married. L. V. herself wanted her to do so, for she was convinced that her son was not among the living, yet at the same time there were no facts to go on and the bride, having no evidence that her husband was dead, could not marry a second time. This uncertainty tortured the mother and young woman terribly. L. V. wept, saying how great Vladika Theophan was and how little we valued and understood and obeyed him. The Poltavians always remembered how Vladika Theophan's prayers healed the sick and how by his prayers he had led many away from sin.

*Translated from the Russian by Antonina Jando*

**THE LIFE AND SUFFERING OF  
THE HOLY HIEROMARTYR ANTHIMUS,  
BISHOP OF NICOMEDIA,  
AND THE MANY WITH HIM**

*Whose Memory the Holy Church Celebrates on the 3rd of September*

The holy Anthimus was born in the city of Nicomedia. Even in his youth he showed forth in himself the abilities of a mature man and was distinguished for his guilelessness. As he grew in body, he grew also in spirit, and when he attained adulthood, he stood far above all others in the virtue of his life. Throughout those years of a man's life when the passions usually thrive like tares among the wheat, Anthimus was a model of dispassion. His flesh was mortified in its sinful desires, and his spirit was full of humility. All envy, irritability and selfishness he uprooted completely from his soul, depriving his body of satiety in food and drink. On the contrary, by his example he showed moderation in all things, love for all, and nobility of mind and assiduous concern for the glory of God.

Because of the piety and virtue of his life, he was, in but a short while, counted worthy of the rank of priest. In that rank Anthimus applied himself with all his heart to prayer, the contemplation of God and spiritually profitable labors, directing all along the saving path of virtue by word and deed. When the holy Cyprian, the archpastor of the Church of Nicomedia, reposed, Anthimus was elevated to his cathedra. His election to the episcopate was borne witness from on high that he was a man worthy thereof: during his consecration a heavenly light illumined the church and a divine voice was heard from above.

Having assumed the governance of the Church of Nicomedia, the holy Anthimus preserved it, like a skilled helmsman preserves his ship unharmed during the storm. For if many Christians were drowned in the sea for Christ's sake, yet even so were they not bemired in impiety, for the tempest of idolatry did not inundate them, nor did the abyss of uttermost hades devour them, but by the instruction and guidance of their holy Archpastor Anthimus they attained unto the calm and peaceful harbor of heaven. This good shepherd of Christ led almost all of his reason-endowed flock to God, arrayed in crowns of martyrdom. When the idolators incited a great persecution against the Christians throughout the East, and particularly in Nicomedia, which was the residence of the ungodly Emperors Diocletian and Maximian, the holy Anthimus guided and strengthened all the faithful for the struggle of martyrdom.

"Now," said he, "it is fitting for us to show ourselves true Christians; now is the time of the contest, now let him who is a true warrior of Jesus Christ go forth manfully into battle! Here will we have to suffer but a little for Christ, Who suffered so much for our sakes. Let us confess Him here before all the people, that He may confess us before His heavenly Father. Let us glorify Him here before men, that He may glorify us before His angels in heaven. Thus, let us glorify God in our bodies, giving ourselves over to tortures, let us die a temporary death, that we may live eternally, let us not fear the tyrants who slay the body. For even if they slay us, they will but become the cause of our future blessedness. The right hand of the Judge of the contest will crown the severed head with an unfading

wreath, dismembered limbs will shine like the sun in His kingdom, the wounds inflicted upon us will only increase our everlasting reward, bloody torments will but bring us into the bridal chamber of the heavenly Bridegroom. Let us make ready to shed even our own blood, let us be a spectacle of abuse and abasement in the sight of angels and men."

Strengthened by these and other discourses of the saint, a great many of the faithful courageously gave themselves over to grievous torments for Jesus, our Lord most sweet. One of the Christians who were aflame with zeal for the Faith, zealous for God, decided on the following daring deed. When the imperial decree for the execution of Christians which was inscribed on a scroll, was read in Nicomedia and afterwards posted in a prominent place, this Christian, stepping forth before all, confessed Christ and, tearing down the decree from the wall, rent it in pieces, publicly denouncing the ungodliness of polytheism. Thus, he became the first martyr in Nicomedia.

Later, a great many of the nobility and persons connected with the court began openly to confess Christ, proclaiming themselves to be Christians, such were Dorotheus, Mardonius, Mardonius, Peter, Indistus, Gorgonius, and a numerous company. They all voluntarily gave themselves over to torture for Christ, and many of them were destroyed by the tormenters, being executed in various ways.

At the same time, to the most grievous tribulation of the Christians was added the following circumstance. The imperial palace caught fire — it was never determined how — and the greater part of it burned down. The impious pagans then slandered the Christians, saying that they had set fire to the imperial palace out of malice. Then the wrath of the Emperor increased exceedingly, and, becoming more savage than a wild beast, he put Christians to death in a great multitude, condemning some to be beheaded and some to be burned alive. Despite a multitude of faithful, seeing the martyrdom of the brethren who shared their Faith and knowing that such things were also being prepared for them, were enflamed with divine love and turned themselves over to the torturers to be consumed by the fire, as though the furnaces were some pleasant and cool place. Many of the remaining Christians were arrested by the torturers, herded aboard a ship, and drowned in the sea. In his unquenchable ire, the Emperor not only commanded that the living be drowned, but even gave orders that the buried bodies of the holy martyrs be exhumed from the earth and cast into the sea, that the Christians who remained alive could no longer venerate them.

Such was the cruel persecution during which the holy Anthonius was hunted down like a lamb for the slaughter. Before tearing the shepherd to pieces, the wolves launched themselves upon his flock, but the providence and protection of God preserved him in a certain village called Sernana, that he might first lead his reason-endowed sheep to God, and only then depart himself, having sealed the Faith of the Church of Nicomedia with his own blood. At that time, as many as twenty thousand holy martyrs were burned alive in the churches on the feast of the Nativity of the Savior (their memory is celebrated by the Church on the 28th of December), and the remnant of the flock of St. Anthonius were cast into prison. By personal letters, which he sent secretly to the Christians, the holy one taught them and made them steadfast in the Faith, thus, although he was not with them in body, being far removed from them, in accordance with God's will, yet in spirit he was present with them in prison, providing them with

spiritual food in his epistles. The sheep struggled openly against the wolves, and the shepherd did so in secret. The holy one did himself not because he was afraid of the torturers, but, by his teaching and prayer he might make steadfast those who were weakest in faith, strong beneath affliction and render the fearful manly, until all might be presented to Christ, then he intended to give himself over to the torments.

One of the faithful who was suffering by the holy Anthimus, a man by the name of Zeno, a soldier by profession, accused the Emperor Maximian publicly of impiety in the following manner. There was in the city of Nicomedia near the docks, a pagan temple dedicated to the goddess Demeter. One day, Maximian, accompanied by his soldiers and a concourse of the people, offered a large sacrifice to the goddess. In the midst of that impious festival, Zeno stood forth on an elevated place and cried aloud: "O Emperor, thou art devoted in worshipping a stone hereof of breath and a mate tree, for this is a deception of the demons which bringeth to destruction those who worship them! Admit the truth, O Maximian, and turn the eyes of thy body and thy spirit to heaven. Look and gazing upon this most beautiful creation, understand of its Fashioner that He is the Creator. Know this by observing those things which have been created: learn to honor that God Who taketh no pleasure in the blood of slaughtered and dumb beasts immolated amid smothering smoke, but in pure souls and the pure heart of a rational creature."

When he heard this, Maximian commanded that Zeno be arrested and beaten with stones about the face and mouth for uttering such audacious words. The torturers struck out his teeth, lacerated his face, mutilated his tongue which confessed Christ, and, finally, led him outside the city, barely alive, and at the Emperor's command cut off his holy head.

At that time, the holy Anthimus sent forth his deacon from the place where he lay concealed. The deacon was entrusted with the holy hierarch's letters to Dorotheus and to the others who were imprisoned for Christ's sake; they exhorted them to endure patiently, that they might be ready joyfully to lay down their lives for the Lord and Bestower of life. The angodly ones arrested the deacon and brought him and the letters he was carrying to the Emperor Maximian. The Emperor read the letters and found written in them that which greatly displeased him: the epistles contained the heartfelt greetings of the saint to the martyrs, his sincere sympathy for them, his paternal instructions, pastoral teaching, hierarchal blessing for the struggle of martyrdom, and strengthening for the casting down of idols. Angered by all of this, the Emperor commanded that all the martyrs be removed from the prison and brought before him for judgment. Casting a haughty and savage glance at them, he abused them at length. Then he commanded that the letters of the holy Anthimus be read as a reproach and denunciation.

"Ye believe the deluded fables of this wicked man," he said, "and listen to his corrupt teaching, rather than the command of the Emperors!" But the faithful, hearing the letters which were read, rejoiced greatly and, shedding tears of joy, saluted the deacon of Anthimus, who stood somewhat apart, with a radiant gaze, a joyous countenance and bowed head, the words of the holy Anthimus, which were read to reproach them, they treasured up in their hearts. Then the Emperor said to the deacon: "Tell

us, from whence hast thou come? Who giveth thee these letters to corrupt the people? Where is he who wrote them hidden?" The deacon, opening his grace-faded lips, began to speak as follows. "He who sendeth these letters is a shepherd. But since he is at a distance from his flock, he guideth them by letter and exhorteth them to piety especially when he heareth of the assault of many wolves on the reason-endowed flock, he loudly telleth the sheep what they must do. He announceth to them the following words of the Chief Shepherd: 'Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.' [Mt. 10:28] I have brought this letter to the flock of Christ to inform them of its contents, but where he who sent it is, I will not say, for it would be truly foolish for me to become the betrayer of my shepherd, from whom all derive great benefit, and who, even without my saying ought of him, will soon be revealed, for a city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. [Mt. 5:14,]"

Enraged by these courageous words, the tyrant sentenced to death the holy deacon, whose name was Theophanes. First, they cut out his tongue which had spoken out with such grace, then they slew him, casting stones at him and shooting him full of arrows. Afterwards, the Emperor commanded that the martyrs brought before him for judgment also be slain in various ways. The holy Dorotheus was beheaded, Mardonius was burned alive, Mygdonius was cast into a pit and buried alive, Gorgonius, Indisus and Peter were drowned in the sea, millstones having been tied to their necks, and all the rest were slain in various other ways. Thus they all passed on to the Lord by divers ways of death. The bodies of the martyrs, which were cast into the sea, were later caught by fishermen in their nets, and a certain maiden by the name of Domna gave them burial. Learning of this, the heathen beheaded her while she was praying over the relics of the holy martyrs. At the same time, Euthymius also, who had convinced many to confess Christ and enter upon the struggle of martyrdom, received a martyr's end, being beheaded in Nicomedia after various tortures. And after all of this it was time for the holy Anthimus also to suffer for confessing Christ Jesus.

While he was hiding in the aforementioned village of Semana and secretly sowing the word of God and increasing the number of those who believed in Christ, Maximian learned of his whereabouts and immediately dispatched twenty soldiers to arrest him. When they reached the village, they were met by the holy Anthimus and asked him, "Where is Anthimus, the teacher of the Christians?" Having greeted the soldiers, Anthimus led them to his own hut and said, "I will tell you of Anthimus and give him into your hands, only rest a little from your journey." Then he offered them food to eat and set before them as extensive a repast as he was able, entertaining them hospitably. Afterwards, the saint revealed to them that he was the Anthimus they were seeking. "I am he for whom ye search," said he, "take me and bring me to him who sent you."

When they heard this, the soldiers were amazed and ashamed to look upon the honored grey hairs of Anthimus, for they had enjoyed his cordial reception and hospitable entertainment. And they began to say amongst themselves that they should not lead this innocent and good man away, not for the well-being of his life, but to a tyrant, to utter grief and the certain death which would follow inevitably after cruel tortures. They began to feel pity for Anthimus and, abashed in his presence, said to him, "We will not take thee with us, but advise thee to hide thyself, and we will say to Maximian that we searched for Anthimus everywhere in the environs of Nicomedia, but could not find him."

But Anthimus zealously kept the commandments of the Lord and therefore urged them to tell the truth, for he did not want them to tell a lie for his sake, moreover, he was anxious to suffer and die for Christ, therefore he went with them. On the way he preached to them the word of God, teaching them faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And the seed of God's word sown by Anthimus did not fall in vain, but took root in good soil, it grew in the hearts of the soldiers, flourished there, and blossomed in their perfection in the Faith. When they reached a river, Anthimus prayed for them and baptized them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Then they set off on their journey again, engaging the whole in spiritually profitable discourse, until they arrived in Nicomedia. When Anthimus entered the city, Maximian was informed, and commanded the messengers to bring the prisoner before him.

Then the saint was brought into the tyrant's presence, his hands bound behind him, for, in witness to the truth, he had to appear bound in just his manner before the tribunal of the angrily pagans, as though he were a malefactor; yet he was free of soul and turned his face to heaven, from whence he expected help. The tyrant ordered that all the instruments used in inflicting torture be brought in, that he might first attempt to frighten Anthimus by the mere sight of them, assuming that the saint would, out of terror, agree to do the Emperor's bidding. Then they began to interrogate him: "Art thou that Anthimus who, in error with regard to a certain ordinary man by the name of Christ, dost lead the simple people also into the same error, deluding them and urging them to oppose our imperial command, and blaspheming and dishonoring our gods with countless mockeries?"

Anthimus, laughing at the instruments of torture which had been brought in and at the Emperor's words, said: "Know, O Emperor, that I would never answer thy question if I were not counselled to do so by the divine Apostle, who instructeth us always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you" (1 Pet 3: 15), for God hath promised to give us 'a mouth and wisdom, which all our adversaries shall not be able to contradict nor withstand' (Isa 54: 13). Before, I laughed at thine idols, which ye call gods, but now I laugh at thy great foolishness in hoping to separate me from my Creator. Who hath honored even thee, an ungrateful creature, with His image. Why hast thou had me brought bound to thy tribunal and set these instruments of torture before me? Dost thou not wish to frighten me, that terrified, I submit to thy godless command? Thou wilt not be able thereby to frighten one who himself desireth to die for his Lord. Set them before those who are fainthearted and timid, for whom this transitory life is a great consolation, and the loss of this transitory life a great sorrow, frighten them, not me. For me this body of clay and this transitory life are like heavy fetters and imprisonment, which are of no use to my soul in passing on to God Whom I desire. Thy threats, punishments and tortures are more pleasing to me, than any earthly delight, for they are followed by death, which, freeing me from corporeal bonds, will transport me whither my Jesus would lead me."

After the saint had uttered these words, the tyrant commanded that he be beaten on the neck with rocks. But Anthimus, accepting these blows with gratitude as the beginning of his sufferings for Christ and his grounds for receiving the crown of martyrdom, desired yet greater sufferings, that he might inherit more exaltation; and mocking and deriding the tyrant and urging him to great wrath, that he might give the order to torture him with the most severe tortments, he repeated the dread words of the Prophet: "Let the gods which have made heaven and the earth perish" (Jer 10: 11).



These words transfixed the heart of the tyrant with ire, and he commanded that the torturers bore through the feet of the hieromartyr with red-hot, sharp iron spikes. Yet this torment was a joy to the martyr, and with gladness he glorified God Who had counted him worthy to endure such sufferings for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Afterwards, Maximian ordered the ground strewn with sharp shards of pottery, and that the sufferer be placed thereon and beaten yet more forcefully with staves, that a twofold pain might penetrate his heart—that of the staves above and that of the sharp pieces of broken pottery below. But even then the saint did not despair of winning the victory over the tormenters, but chanted, “I thank Thee, O King of the ages, for Thou hast girded me with power for war, in subjection under me hast Thou bound the feet of all them that rose up against me. And Thou hast made mine enemies turn their back before me, and them that hate me has, Thou utterly destroyed” [Ps 17:40-41].”

Then the tyrant discovered another torment, having heated brazen sandals, he had the feet of Anthimus shod therewith. But divine grace from on high overshadowed the sufferer, strengthening him in his sufferings, and he heard a voice which promised that he would very soon receive a heavenly crown, and this voice filled his heart with blessedness. Because of the consolation the holy one derived from that voice, he was said by all to pay no heed whatsoever to the tortures, and his face was illumined with a celestial joy, as though he were not undergoing any suffering at all. Seeing this, the tyrant was at a loss and said of the holy Anthimus that he was a sorcerer and that it was by means of some wizardry that he was withstanding the power of the fire to burn. And they asked him what he had to rejoice over amid such torments.

“The reason I rejoice so,” replied the saint, “is that these sufferings are for me a sure hope for the good things I have been promised. In a short time I will utterly vanquish thy haughty arrogance and shall prove that thy gods are much more impotent than human strength. Thou wilt repent of thy wickedness forever, but to no avail. No sooner wilt thou depart this life, than thou wilt be condemned to everlasting damnation.”

All the more enraged by these words, the tyrant ordered the saint bound to a wheel, the axle of which was to be rotated, turning the saint's body as it was burned with fire. But as the henchmen carried out the Emperor's command, tying Anthimus to the wheel and kindling the fire under him, they suddenly fell down as though dead. The wheel ceased its motion, and the fire lept out and scorched them. Afterwards they told the tyrant. When we began to turn the wheel and to burn him who was bound to it, three radiant men appeared near us and said, “Fear not, O Anthimus, servant of God.” And when they turned their gaze upon us, we were stricken with fear, and the fire beneath the wheel lept out at our faces and burned us.”

On hearing this, the tyrant was amazed, yet ascribed it all to sorcery. After they removed the holy Anthimus from the wheel, the Emperor decreed that he was to have him beheaded if he did not, after sacrifice to the idols. The martyr hearing that they intended to behead him, rejoiced and fervently besought God to grant that he might quickly rejoice his flock, which had ascended to heaven before him, by the path of martyrdom that he also might say, “Behold, here am I and the children which God hath given me” [Is 8:18].

But the iniquitous Emperor commanded instead that the saint be cast into a dungeon and fettered with iron chains. When they were conducting Anthimus to the prison, he rendered glory and thanks to God for all things. And suddenly a light from heaven illumined him, and the chains fell from him; and the servants who were bringing him to that place fell to the ground in fear. But Anthimus, raising them up, ordered them to do as they had been commanded. When they reached the prison, the saint entered into it and remained therein in the midst of the malefactors and thieves incarcerated there. Yet he rejoiced as though he had been brought to a banquet or a nuptial celebration. Setting before the prisoners the spiritual food of the word of God and offering them the drink of piety, he won them over to Christ and united them to His Holy Church, teaching them the Faith and good works; and there in the prison he also gave them new birth through the water of baptism. And that dungeon became a splendid church, full of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, where the faithful offered to God the sacrifice of praise day and night.

Learning of this, Maximian commanded that the holy Anthimus be brought before him and strove to induce him by flattery to worship the heathen gods, promising to make him first among the priests who ministered to the idols. But Anthimus answered the Emperor with his usual boldness: "Even before thou spakest I was a hierarch most exalted among the priests of God; I am a priest of Christ, the Chief Shepherd, Who arrayed Himself in my flesh and for my sake came down to me from heaven. He offered up the sacrifice of redemption for the people before God the Father, died on the Cross, was buried, and three days later rose from the dead; and He hath ascended into the heavens with glory, leading up all who believe in Him. I am His priest, and this is why I am offering myself to Him as a living sacrifice. But your priesthood and sacrifices and supposed gods are darkness and lead to everlasting darkness."

When he heard this, the tyrant condemned Anthimus to death. The saint went forth to his death, full of heavenly joy, saying: "Now is my time of jubilation; now hath my desire found fulfilment; now is the portal of everlasting life opened unto me! Yea, departing this body, I shall enter in unto my Lord; and I shall delight when His glory is made manifest unto me!"

When he reached the place of execution, where he was to experience a transitory death to pass on to the life without end, the holy hierarch requested some time for prayer; and, having offered up supplication, he bent his holy head beneath the axe wherewith, in accordance with the Emperor's command, he was beheaded. Thus he achieved martyrdom for Christ, on the 3rd day of September, in the year 303. When evening fell, certain of the faithful went secretly to the place of execution, carried away the much-suffering body of the holy Anthimus, and buried it with honor, glorifying the Holy Trinity: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Who are one God. Amen.

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Translated from the Russian by Isaac E. Lambertsen from *The Lives of the Saints in the Russian Language as Set Forth in the Menology of St. Dimitri of Rostov*, Vol. I (September) (Moscow: Synodal Press, 1902), pp. 67-78.  
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## URGENT — NEWS FROM CHILE AND UGANDA — URGENT

Urgent letters have been received from both Fr. Gerasimos in Uganda and Mother Juliana in Chile, detailing the present situations there and the needs of the respective missions. Space limitations (this is a last-minute stop-press change in the contents of this issue) preclude any extensive quotations from those letters. We beg our readers, however, to take note of the circumstances, and respond with as much generosity as possible.

**The letter from Chile** informs us that **contributions** by the former routing have dropped in June to less than 20% of the level of the "typical" January contributions (each month there was a consistent drop in number of donors and amount of contributions). This drop has not been compensated for by any increase in receipt of donations by direct mail. **It is the orphans who suffer most from this deprivation**, for the needs of the orphanage go on unabated. Winter rains (and shortage of funds as well!) have impeded construction on additional facilities to assist the convent and orphanage in becoming self-supporting; the bus which is a primary means of transportation has once again gone to the garage for repairs; the furnace is causing trouble... a rather serious matter in the midst of a Chilean winter. Storms have clogged pipes and left convent and orphanage without running water; the electrical supply threatens to fail altogether. A family of "helpers" insist that the Convent pay their way back to the States... with a side-trip to Argentina on the way. And so it goes wherever anyone truly tries to do the Lord's will. Please do not forget the sisters, the 39 girls in the orphanage, and the 200 children in the school. Wherever the Church is, it must care for the needs of God's little ones... and we, who are blessed to live in the midst of so much plenty, must never forget our obligation to share with those on the "front-lines", struggling to share the true Faith and do the work of the Gospel.

**A letter from Fr. Gerasimos** received within the past few days details the dreadful story of his violent arrest at gun-point (on never-specified grounds) by the militia, the desecration of the Church of the Annunciation there by these same forces (on two separate occasions), the terrorizing of the faithful, and (thanks be to God!) his ultimate release with an apology (but no explanation or certainty that further incidents will not occur) and request that he continue his work there. Despite such tribulations, the work does progress... on the temple, the clinic, and the school. Growing numbers of people are being born into the holy Faith, encouraged by the willingness of a few to risk their health and lives in a difficult situation. In the light of this, the request for helpers which appears elsewhere in this issue takes on a bit less of the aspect of a vacation and rather more that of a *podvig*! Needless to say, the work cannot continue without substantial outside support, and it is safe to assume that support for the mission in Uganda has, like that for the orphanage in Chile, been substantially reduced as an unfortunate by-product of the recent falling into schism of a large number of supporters (and, with them, one of the primary channels for that support). In furtherance of his mission (and no doubt for a little much-needed respite), Fr. Gerasimos is expected to visit this country in the immediate future (indeed, may be here by the time this reaches our readers). As the most efficient use of contributions is by the purchase of needed items here and in Europe (rather than in support of international bankers for exchange fees!), we urge our readers to exercise their generosity sooner rather than later! Fr. Gerasimos will be travelling throughout the country to acquaint the faithful with the mission, share something of the life there, and raise funds for the purpose. We would be happy to hear from any who feel it would be beneficial for him to visit in their parishes, that an attempt may be made to include this in his itinerary.

For both of these deserving missions, as well as for the other beneficiaries of the St. John of Kronstadt Benevolent Fund (to which tax-deductible checks may be made), we urge your generosity. Checks may be "tagged" for either or both of these missions, for the St. Edward Brotherhood in England, for relief for Orthodox clergy and/or families in need, and/or for Discretionary use. Address to: **The St. John of Kronstadt Benevolent Fund; Rt. 1 Box 205; Liberty, TN 37095 USA.**

## MENAION SERVICES UPDATE

It gives us pleasure to inform our readers that the release of services from the Orthodox Menaion and selected Akathist hymns is proceeding much more rapidly than originally anticipated. To date, some 50 services have been released. It now appears that all translations which had been completed before this publishing undertaking began will be released in typeset form by the end of the year, along with a substantial number of newly-translated services, not previously available in any form.

For those readers who may be a bit uncertain as to exactly what a "menaion service" is, a brief note: These services are the complete materials for the commemoration of a particular saint, icon, or event, with all the special hymns for Vespers, Matins and Liturgy. Of course, for some commemorations there are many more special hymns than for others, so the length of the individual services varies substantially... from as little as three to as many as 12 or more pages. These materials are combined on a particular day with the ordinary components of the respective services, and materials from the Sunday or Daily Octoechos, and/or the Triodion and Pentecostarion.

While the project began with uncertainty as to whether it would ever provide sufficient revenue to even reasonably compensate the translator and the publisher for the enormous amount of time (and not inconsiderable cash expenses) involved in the work, we have discovered with pleasure that the number of subscribers to the services is approaching the point at which it will be possible to reduce the per-page charge for the materials. Whenever this point is reached, subscribers to the entire series of record as of that date will receive a credit on their accounts reflecting the reduced charge, applicable to all services already shipped as well as those to come.

At the present time, the services are supplied photocopied in two-column format on mylar-edged punched paper, for assembly in ring or post binders. [There is no necessary relationship between this format and the as yet undetermined format of the final published bound volumes, the publication of which will certainly take many years.] The cost at present is 35¢/printed page (soon to be reduced, we hope), of which 10¢ is returned to the translator. In addition, postage (first class) and handling charges are assessed for each shipment. Subscribers may enroll for all services as released (including those already available) with a minimum account deposit of \$150; or for only those services, as released, which will be needed on coming Sundays (together with a few selected additional feasts of major rank), for a minimum account deposit of \$50.

The great difference in efficiency between handling subscriptions for all materials as released, and in assembling sets of already-released material (usually requiring large amounts of photocopying of materials in an inefficient manner), requires that there be a significant difference in the charges assessed subscribers for the services, and those assessed for the purchase of a few selected services here and there. The same inefficiencies apply to the addition of new subscribers for all services, who must be supplied with copies of all the services already released.

We therefore urge all who may wish to have these services available, but who have not already subscribed, to enter their subscriptions at once. **Subscribers who enroll before 1 September (NS) 1987** will be served at the same costs as those whose enrollments are already in effect. **After that date**, it will be necessary to impose surcharges on the supply of already-released services for new subscribers.

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The growing interest in the services encourages us, despite the difficulties, to provide some reasonable means by which individual services may be purchased. An indexing of the services available as of its press time is provided each year in the Church Calendar and Typicon published by the press; but this index is obviously out of date even by the time it is distributed. Hence, we will make available an intermittent updated list of services, together with the retail cost (somewhat higher than the subscription cost) of each, and a chart for the special postage & handling charges needed (special because all services are shipped by 1st class, and are specially packed to minimize the likelihood of their arriving bent and mangled). This updated list will be released approximately every two months, and available by subscription, at a cost of \$5 for six releases. [In addition, once all services which existed at the beginning of the publication project have been released, it may be possible to make available subscriptions for only new, previously untranslated materials.]

One final note of interest: The expectation is that in due course three series of hardbound, printed volumes will be released: one containing the official Menaion of the Orthodox Church from the Russian Menaion (perhaps supplemented with material from the Greek Menaion), another containing additional services from other sources, and yet a third containing akathist hymns to the Mother of God and the saints. All three of these series will be made available **at cost** to those who have supported the project throughout by all-services subscriptions.

To those who have so supported it, to the translator, to David, whose assistance in type entry for the already-existing services has been invaluable, and to those already at work in rigorous copy-editing of the materials as they are released, we offer thanks! May the Lord richly reward their labors.

## WANTED

- Orthodox handymen, carpenters, stoneworkers, electrical wizards, etc.
  - To buy return ticket USA—East Africa
- To help work on Orthodox Church and Clinic, during vacation
  - Sand beaches and growing Orthodox Community
  - No smoking, no drinking, no perverted thinking
    - just lots of love and hard work
- Why go to the Bahamas this winter (or any other time)  
when you can come one step closer to the Kingdom of Heaven
- Security by Guardian Angels and blessings from your priest or bishop

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